THE WRECK-HUNTERS

FRANCIS ROLT-WHEELER

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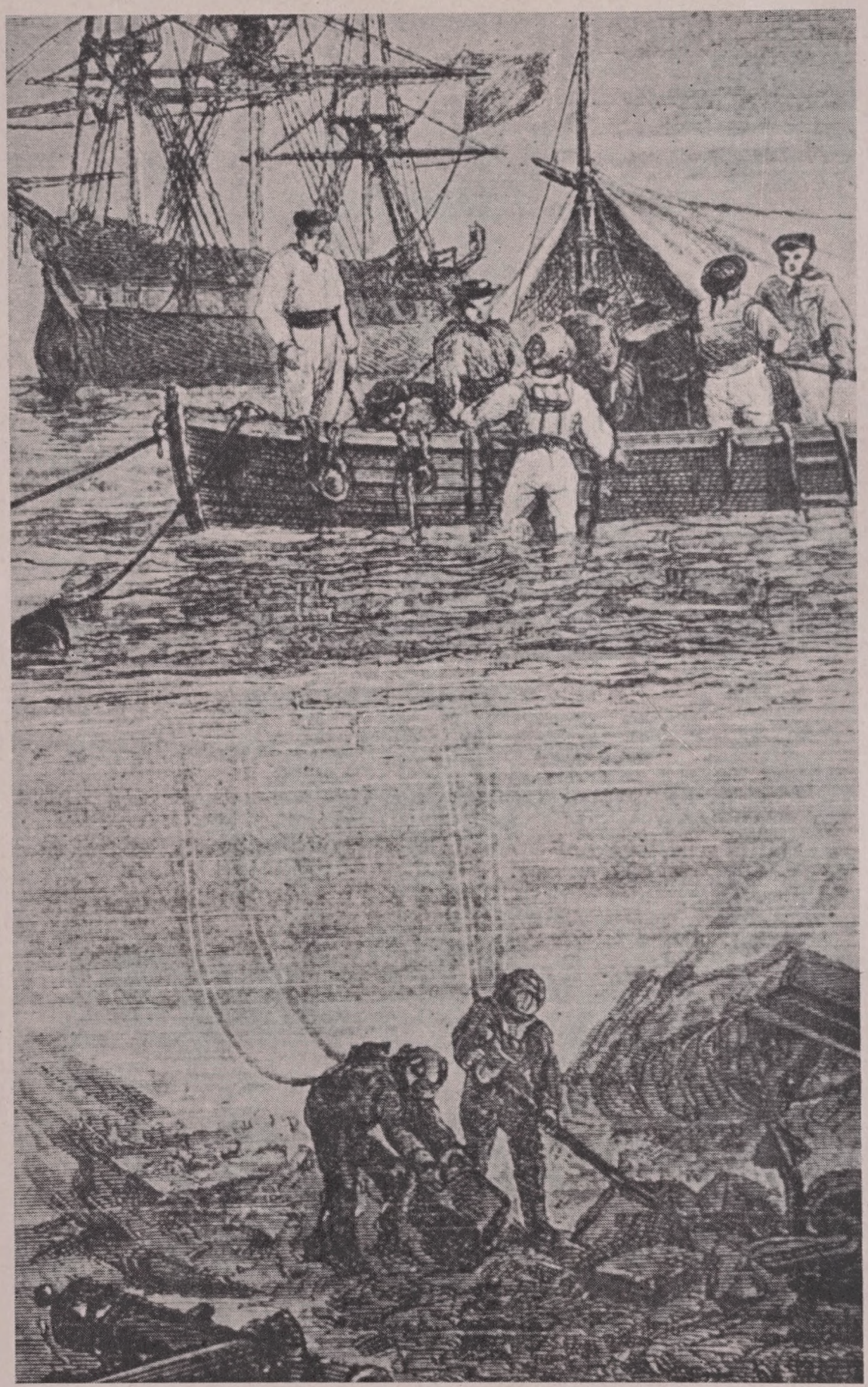

THE VIGO TREASURE-SEEKERS.

The sunken galleons of the Spanish plate-fleet being explored by divers. Over $2,000,000 in gold was recovered.

THE WRECK-HUNTERS

By

FRANCIS ROLT-WHEELER

WITH FORTY ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

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PREFACE

UNCOUNTED billions of masterless gold lie at the bottom of the sea, awaiting the adventurous seeker and the lucky finder. Much of it lies in shallow water, yet it is not easy either to discover or to reclaim. Many daring deeds have been done, and many millions of dollars' worth of ingots of gold and silver, doubloons and pieces of eight have been raised from sunken Spanish galleons and pirate craft.

Wrecking and salvage have ever been among the most tempting lures of the sea. They beckon still. Nay, they beckon even more insistently than ever, for the toll of treasure ever becomes greater and the devices for recovering it become more ingenious and more powerful, day by day.

Modern salvage bears little resemblance to the piratic wreckers of olden time. It has become an industry with a tremendous power of rescue, and there is a speed and a thrill in great salvage operations that no other work affords.

Whether lives, ships or cargoes are to be saved, the wreckers must hurry at a reckless pace through driving gales and mountainous seas to some rocky coast where a vessel is pounding to pieces. They must handle a helpless liner in the teeth of a hurricane, and, even after a vessel has gone down, they will try to raise her from her oozy bed.

The diver lives in a world unknown to other men, the world of the bottom of the sea. Always strange, and often, terrible, are the adventures of a diver's life. Yet wreckers, salvers, and divers together form a heroic company to wrestle with sea and storm, and many a hapless vessel is saved by their daring. To show how splendid and how gallant is this work and by what great means it is accomplished, is the aim and purpose of

THE AUTHOR.

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THE WRECK-HUNTERS

CHAPTER I

CRABS OF THE SURF

"Ay! But who ran her on the reef?" came the suspicious query.

"Ol' Admiral Voley," as he was known from one of the Bahamas to the other, roared back at his son with hurricane violence:

"What's that to you, Swab-Face? 'Tis Providence that runs a vessel on a reef!"

"And Providence that puts up false lights as a decoy, eh, Father?"

The old wrecker glared across the table.

"Ye'd warn her, I s'pose," he sneered, "an' ask the skipper to chuck ye a sixpence for yer pains."

"I wouldn't wreck her deliberately, anyhow!" Captain Jerry Voley countered sharply, for he laid great stress on carrying out his sal-

vage operations in a legitimate way and by modern methods.

"But ye'd grab everything ye could, when she did strike!"

"That's different."

The old man spat, and significantly washed out his mouth with his grog.

"Different! It's wrecking, isn't it? Only ye haven't got the nerve to do it right! An' the boy, there, he's worse!" the "Admiral" added, pointing with the stem of his pipe at his grandson, Latimer, who was listening, leaning forward with his elbows on the table. "He thinks wrecking's a nursemaid's job!"

The boy shifted uneasily in his chair. He had a most wholesome terror of his grandfather, though he all but worshipped him.

"The old buccaneer blood hasn't weakened much in you, Father," rejoined Captain Voley, with a smile. "Nor the pirate blood, either. I believe you'd run up the Jolly Roger to-morrow, if you thought there was half a chance!"

"Piracy at sea ain't no worse'n piracy ashore," came the growling retort. "Takin' folks' money for low-grade goods ain't no better'n buccaneerin', an', as for this 'high finance'

ye read about in the papers, that's nothin' but piratin' under false colors with a skipper too yaller to put up a real he-fight."

This was a sore subject between the two, for Captain Jerry Voley was a strong believer in modern commerce and up-to-date invention. He even had a small wireless outfit on his wrecking tug, the *Moray*. He understood his business, too. When it came to talking, the old man always scored, but he could not deny that whenever his son went out in his little wrecking tug, it was seldom that he failed to bring back to the coral-built house on North Biminis Island a considerable amount of loot.

The "Admiral," unquestioned autocrat of all the wreckers from Great Bahama to Turks Island, was now nearly ninety years of age, and went to sea but seldom. On occasions, he could not be kept at home, and then he assumed absolute control. He was a Czar of the seas, in every sense of the world, and every wrecker on the Bahamas, negro or white, jumped smartly when the old man roared a command.

He was a master-wrecker, born and bred. The blood of pirates ran in his veins, and "'Ristocrat Voley" was a name of fear in West In-

dian seas at the end of the eighteenth century. "Ol' Admiral Voley" was his grandson. When but a boy, in the "plundering fifties," he had been an active despoiler of ships in distress, and it was against him and his like that all the maritime countries of the world arose in grim determination to sweep the "wreckers of the Bahamas" from the sea. They only partially succeeded. In point of fact, the biters got bit, for one light cruiser and one gunboat got hung up on the reefs, the latter in a fretwork of jagged rocks known as "The Pirates' Snare." Right or wrong, "Admiral" Voley had the credit of having decoyed the gunboat there.

In the days of the Civil War, "Admiral" Voley had been one of the most daring of the blockade-runners. In the *Giraffe,* afterwards renamed the *Robert E. Lee,* he successfully ran the blockade twenty-six times in succession. Towards the end of the war, he was in command of the blockade-runner *Chameleon,* and, the only time he was caught, he handled the situation with such consummate cleverness that the Yankee officer who had captured him, had to let him go.

Those were prosperous days, and the "Ad-

miral" had grown rich. In this he was no great exception, for, at that time, the town of Nassau was glutted with gold. To him were always given the most dangerous and the most lucrative tasks, for he was a superb sailorman and knew every reef and shoal of those treacherous coasts with a suspiciously exact knowledge. Moreover, he had a keen legal brain and a certain rough oratory which made him a powerful force in the islands.

Time after time he had bearded the Governors sent by the British Crown to try to bring order amid the semi-piratic population, and he would not have scrupled to bellow his opinions in the teeth of the most select assembly in the world. As for arguing—one might as well argue with a thunderbolt!

Twenty times and more, efforts to pass laws to prevent deliberate and collusive wrecking were overthrown in the Colonial Assembly by this hurricane-voiced skipper and his free-booting following. It might be added that many of the legislators shared his opinions, and were secretly glad to have this rough-tongued old sea-dog fight their battles for them.

As recently as 1870, over three-quarters of a

million dollars' worth of plunder was brought into the port of Nassau in one year, and no one was such a fool as to suppose that the wrecks from which this plunder had been taken had all struck the reefs by accident. Moreover, since, in that year, there were but sixty-two small vessels engaged in the work of wrecking and as the actual value of the salvaged goods was assessed by the Admiralty Courts at $767,695, it followed that each vessel averaged a haul of $12,382 for a single season. It is easy to see where the "Admiral" found supporters.

In view of the fact that, at this time, agriculture had not flourished on the Bahamas, and that the sponge-fishing industry had hardly begun, it was not surprising that Bahamans should prefer the mad lottery of wrecking to drudgery on land which would bring them but little profit. In those old days, all the colonists hung together.

A venerable man was the "Admiral," and he would never admit that wrecking ought to have changed. He held fast to the old rule that the first wreck-master aboard a wrecked ship was the only one who had a right to dictate how that wreck should be handled, and the only one to

negotiate with the captain of the ship. In three famous cases, at least, those of the *Stephen F. Austin,* the *Karnak,* and the *Hartley,* "Admiral" Voley fought this question of wreckers' rights before the Vice-Admiralty courts, and forced the courts to yield.

In consequence, every suspicious wreck which occurred around the Bahamas was blamed on the "Admiral," and, often enough, not without reason. Such was the case now. A vessel was reported ashore off "The Little Isaacs" and Captain Voley was sure that his father had a hand in it.

"Gettin' up steam on the *Moray?*" the old wrecker shot out.

"Should have a full head by now," was the reply. "Coming along this time, Father?"

"Ay! Leave you alone, an' you'd offer to tow her off for nothin', like as not!"

The old man heaved the huge ruin of his bulk to his feet with the aid of the table.

"Can I come, Grap?" pleaded Latimer, using the island diminutive for "Grandpap."

"Ay, ye can come, if ye keep yer newfangled notions in yer head an' don't talk too much," was the grudging reply.

In two bounds Latimer had reached the cupboard, pulled out oilskins and sou'wester, and was on his way after the two men, who had already started for the beach.

"So she's struck on 'The Little Isaacs,' eh?" Latimer heard the "Admiral" say.

"Struck hard, I hear."

"H'm, that's where the *Black Pearl* went down in sixty-eight. Jules brought ye word, eh?"

Captain Voley wheeled on his father.

"How in the name of the Big Green Turtle did you know that it was Jules who found her?"

The old sinner chuckled.

"Ye'll notice, Son," he answered, "that Jules ain't ever hard up for money to buy a bottle or two."

"It's easy enough to find wrecks of your own making," declared the son, darkly.

But the old sea-dog rolled along, singing huskily:

"Give me a wreck in a reef-filled sea,
With rum as a royal potion;
Gold in the hold and the rocks a-lee,
And a-plenty of graves in the ocean."

This was a blood-curdling song of some fifty

or more verses, of which the old wrecker used to deliver himself whenever he was feeling particularly gay. Aside from hymns—to which he was partial, though he was apt to mix the words up somewhat—this was the only song the "Admiral" knew.

Latimer disliked the song, in itself, yet he was always glad to hear it, for he knew it meant that his grandfather was in the humor to tell stories of the olden days, which occurred but rarely.

As soon as they were aboard the *Moray,*—as Captain Voley's ocean-going tug was called,—Latimer, hearing his grandfather still humming the tune of "Give me a wreck, etc.," sidled up to him, and asked:

"Were you the wreck-master on the *Black Pearl,* Grap?"

"Ay, Lat," answered the old sea-dog, and chuckled.

"What was so funny about it, Grap?"

"Funny!" The "Admiral's" expression changed. "There wasn't fun enough to tie a knot on! But for a scrap, 'twas as pretty a little tussle as ever I had with the Florida beachcombers. An' then hide-an'-go-seek with a gunboat to top off with!"

And he burst forth with:

"Many a good ship comes to grief
When there's hardly a cat's-paw blowing,
And lands hard and fast on a coral reef,
With only the wreckers knowing."

Latimer interrupted him with:

"But about the *Black Pearl,* Grap?"

"Ay, the *Black Pearl,*" returned the old wrecker reminiscently. "She was a barquentine, a rig ye don't see much nowadays. Bound from New York to Havana, she was, with a general cargo, all sorts o' stuff, from a hank o' lace to a piano. Worth money, Lat! She ran on 'The Little Isaacs.'"

The old wrecker cocked a wicked eye at his grandson.

"Queer sort o' place for a ship to strike, ye'll say when ye see it. Any good skipper oughter be able to keep off? Maybe. But there was a norther breezin' up good, an' the *Black Pearl* didn't answer to her helm none too quick. Leastwise, that's what they said."

He turned on Captain Voley, who had strolled up to hear the yarn.

"I s'pose, Son Jerry," he snapped, "ye'd be blamin' me for the norther, too."

"I'd hate to put you in charge of all the winds of the world, Father," was the good-humored answer. "Lloyds would report even more 'Ships Missing' than it does now."

The "Admiral" grunted disapproval, and went on with his story:

"There was ten schooners of us started out that night, an' when we got to 'The Little Isaacs' the swell was kickin' in, rollin' over the outer reef with a nasty lop an' chuckin' the spray to leeward fifty fathom an' more. Ye've never played 'round 'The Little Isaacs,' have ye, Son?"

"I've never had a wreck there, Father, no. This one will be the first."

"It'd be yer last, too, if I wasn't aboard," warned the old wrecker. "I'll take the *Moray* in for ye."

"I've got your chart, Father," was the confident answer. "You've marked all the reefs and shoals on that."

"I have, have I?" The "Admiral" leered shrewdly. "Maybe there's some I haven't charted, Son Jerry! It don't do to tell all ye know. I say, I'll take the *Moray* in."

"Suits me," the captain of the steamer an-

swered, and he was entirely sincere. "I'd let you take the *Moray* over 'The Pirates' Snare' if you said you could make it."

Obviously flattered at this tribute to his seamanship, the old sea-dog resumed:

"We kept well to wind'ard o' the *Black Pearl,* for there wasn't no manner o' use in gettin' too close to trouble, an' she'd run in right close to the 'Devil's Kegs' that lie off to the east'ard."

Captain Voley started.

"I don't know those rocks. They're not charted!" he cried.

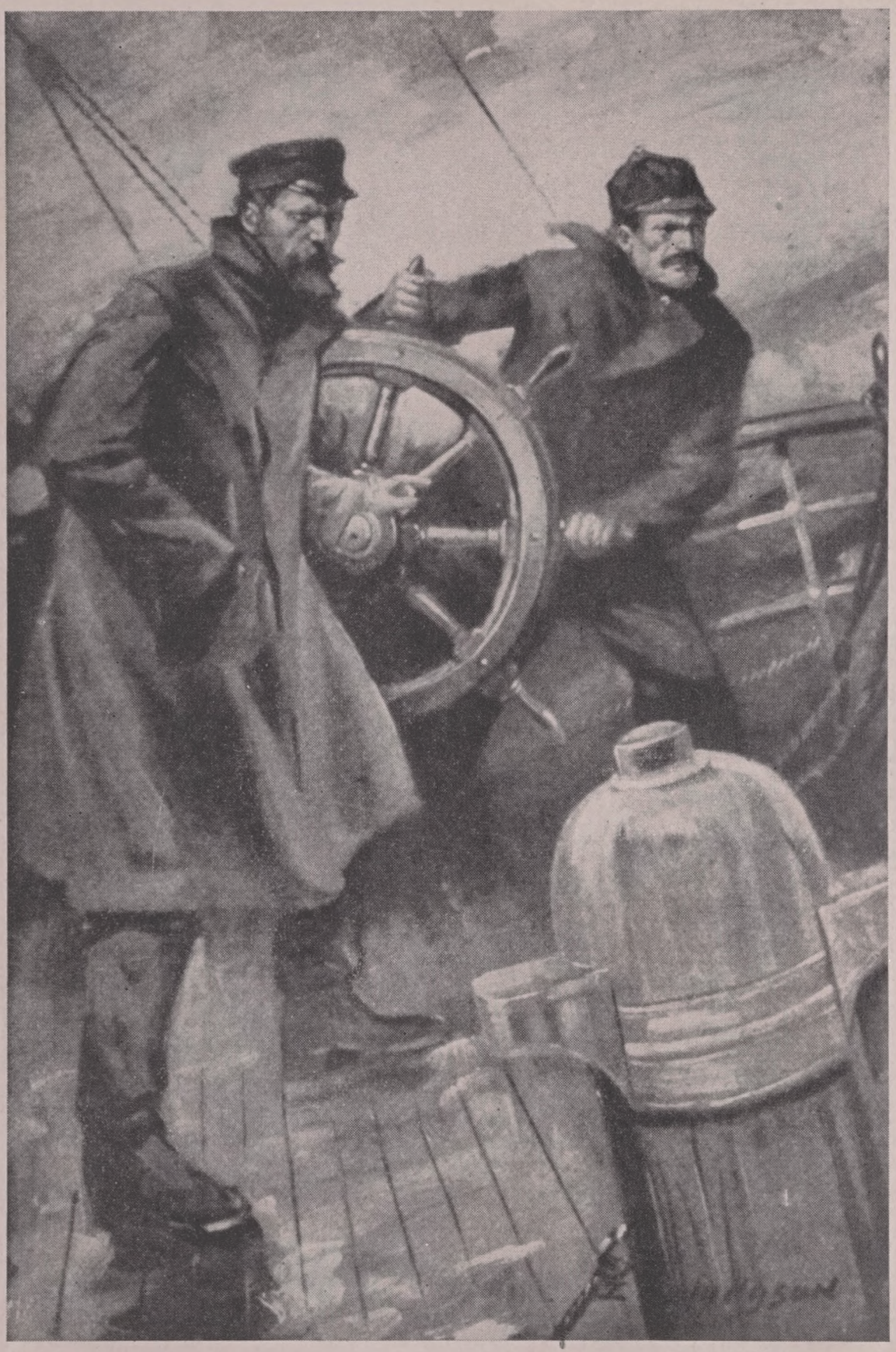
"They're there!" retorted the "Admiral," dryly, and continued, "The surf was breakin' over the 'Devil's Kegs' fit to smother the *Black Pearl,* an' the water all around was soapy green. It's a nasty place in there, no lee anywhere to run into, an' the way that norther was comin' down, the best anchor wouldn't hold.

"Some o' the Black Fleet (wrecking vessels owned and handled by Bahama negroes) wouldn't stay with it, an' ran for 'Belaying Pin Key' to get anchorage until the sea went down. Me, I wasn't lookin' for no anchorage. I was after that cargo, an' wasn't going to lose any

Courtesy of Houghton, Mifflin and Co.

LITTLE LEFT FOR SALVAGE.

Ship on a surf-bound shore being pounded to pieces, while her cargo is scattered far and wide.



Courtesy of Cassell and Co.

THE SEA BREEDS HEROES.

No finer tales are told than those of sailormen who risk their vessels and their lives to save their fellows in distress, though a storm be raging.

chances o' havin' the Key West beach-combers comin' up.

"I was a bit younger in those days an' it took more'n water to scare me. So me, and eleven others—I always paid my own crew double wages—got in a boat an' shot between the 'Devil's Kegs,' knowin', o' course, that if the boat didn't smash the first time she struck, she would the second."

"And then you had to swim for it, Grap?"

"Swim, Lat? Much good it'd be trying to swim on 'The Little Isaacs'! Even you'd get smashed, half-fish though ye think yerself. No, lad, if any of us got safe through the 'Devil's Kegs,' we'd have to crawl on the jagged coral, with the waves poundin' like all creation, an' if any one lost hand-hold, good-bye!

"Goin' like a clipper yacht, I steered the boat clear into the teeth o' the rocks. Smash! A dozen holes were driven in her, but wind an' surf were behind an' she lifted an' struck twice afore goin' into splinters too small for firewood. Then it was claw an' hang on, crawlin' slow an' holdin' sideway to the surf, for if ever one o' them waves caught a man fair in the back, his

backbone'd snap like the stem of a pipe. Nine of us got aboard."

"And the other three, Grap?"

"Gone to Davy Jones' locker," was the curt reply. "Nine got aboard, one with a broken arm, one with a broken leg. I fixed the last one up, best I could. You know him, Lat, it's old Copper-Face Phil, Jules' father."

"So that's why he's lame! I've often wondered how he got his bad leg."

"That's why. I've pensioned him, these fifty years an' more. Maybe that's why Jules does 'most anything I want.

"Well, there was nine of us aboard, two out o' commission. Bright an' early next mornin', along comes the Key West beach-combers, fourteen schooners of 'em and 'Red-Cap Morgan' in command. They'd over two hundred men aboard, an' two hundred against seven is a bit too much odds. I slipped below an' rousted out some duds belongin' to the skipper o' the *Black Pearl,* an' some o' the mate's duds for one o' my men, for that scramble over the coral hadn't left us much more'n our hides. Then I leaned over the rail, easy-like, an' waited for 'Red-Cap' to come up.

"I kept that skipper's cap pulled down over my face, an' he didn't know me, o' course.

"'Hey, Cap'n,' he shouted, 'we're comin' aboard!'

"'When you're asked,' says I, 'an' not afore.'

"'We'll get her off or salvage her for you, for a third o' the cargo,' he sings out.

"'Ye're blind in both eyes,' says I. 'What do ye think she is—a derelict? We'll snake her out ourselves, soon as the sea goes down.'

"He gave me the laugh at this, as he had right, seein' the *Black Pearl* was stuck on 'The Little Isaacs' like a piece o' toast on a toastin' fork.

"'Wait till the Black Fleet comes up!' he yelled. 'Those pirates will take everything you've got an' knife you into the bargain.'

"We howled at each other till we were both hoarse, but he never suspected that we were from the Bahamas ourselves. If he had, the only folk who'd ha' known what happened to us would ha' been the sharks.

"Then, rollin' up from 'Belayin' Pin Key,' came the rest o' the boys, mine an' some o' the Black Fleet.

"That was a bit too much for 'Red-Cap.' His men started to get out one o' his boats, so's he could get aboard afore any o' our men. That wouldn't do. If he didn't get drowned on the 'Devil's Kegs' he'd land aboard an' I'd have to kill him, or he'd kill me. There wouldn't be any other way out.

"So I pulls off my skipper's cap, an' sings out:

"'Easy off, Red-Cap, there,' says I, 'this is Admiral Voley, wreck-master in charge o' this barquentine.'

"His language in answer was hot enough to scorch the rocks. But he was ready for a fight, was 'Red-Cap,' an' he swung his schooner an' headed her for the reef. I saw his trick. He reckoned on smashin' his own schooner to bits, but bringin' her alongside. Then he'd pitch me overboard, an' be in his rights to keep the Black Fleet off.

"One of my men saw the scheme, too, an' he steered for the reef, figurin' he'd be in time for some o' the fightin'. Holy Whale! Ye never saw such a smash as when those two schooners hit the reef at the same minute an', out o' the smother, both bunches came scramblin' aboard.

There was a half a dozen broken heads afore I could separate 'em."

"I'm surprised at you separating them, Father," put in Captain Voley, sarcastically.

"They'd fourteen schooners to my ten, an' half the men I had were Blacks," the "Admiral" replied. "Besides, I keep out o' trouble when I can. If we'd ha' killed any o' the Key Westers, there'd ha' been a fine howl.

"Meantime, out to sea, there'd been a hogshead o' trouble. She was blowin' half a gale, good, an' sea enough. Manœuvrin' around, the bowsprit of a Key Wester raked the mainsail of a Black schooner an' brought it down by the run, tanglin' the Key Wester in the wreckage.

"The Blacks didn't stand idle. They swarmed along that bowsprit an' went for the Key Westers with knives. The beach-combers fought 'em back with pump handles. All hands aboard the *Black Pearl* stood by an' watched. It was a hand-to-hand tussle in a smashin' sea, both schooners grappled an' drivin' in towards the reefs. But they broke apart after a while, an' then I turned to 'Red-Cap.'

"'Look-a-here, Red-Cap,' says I, 'ye've got

more men than I have, an' if it comes to an up-and-down fight all round, ye'll win.'

"'An' toss the last livin' one o' ye overboard when we've done,' says he savagely.

"'That's as may be,' says I. 'But before ye can salvage this cargo, I can have forty schooners here in two hours an' ye can't get any here under fifteen hours. An' some one else'd be goin' overboard, then.'

"'Like enough,' says he, 'but we'll have plenty o' company.'

"'Which means a lot o' good men killed an' neither one gets the cargo,' says I. 'We'll salve this together. I've got first rights as wreck-master but I'll waive 'em since we're outnumbered. You pick your men,' says I, 'an' I'll pick mine. I'll have a red-paint line drawn down the middle o' the deck, here, from bow to stern. You take fifty o' your men, I'll take fifty o' mine. Bring 'em aboard. We'll open all the hatches. Everything your men pull out o' the hold, they put on the port side, everything our men get we'll put to starboard. The quickest workers get the most.'

"'That's fair,' says 'Red-Cap.'

"When we opened the hatches an' the Key

Westers saw what the cargo was, they went wild. For a minute, I thought 'Red-Cap' was goin' back on his word an' would fight. But I hadn't let 'em open the hatches until there was just as many o' my men aboard as his, an' he knew, as I said, that if he started any dirty work, I could get word to Nassau long before he could to Key West.

"That was one wild unloadin'! Both sides worked like they was mad. But I'd picked mainly Blacks for my work, an' they can stand a hot sun better'n the Florida whites, who're a poor-fed crowd, anyway. We got the pickin's, and 'Red-Cap' got madder'n a ship's cook when the sea puts his galley fire out. I didn't let him out o' my sight, though.

"There was trouble enough, as it was. If one o' the fellows on our side o' the line, or on the other, saw something he fancied, he'd wait his chance to roll it over, when the other fellow wasn't lookin'. 'Red-Cap's' men were worse'n ours, for mine knew me.

"The sea was beginnin' to go down, now, so's we could load a bit, an' those bales an' cases were just a-flyin'! We hadn't got more'n about two-thirds aboard when up comes a British gun-

boat. We scattered an' ran. We'd a good haul, anyway. Me, I ran for 'Belayin' Pin Key,' transferred all the loot to another schooner, an' scudded back. When I got to 'The Little Isaacs,' the gunboat had already sent a gig. I got out a boat, dropped back to the wreck, and climbed up the side.

"'First wreck-master aboard!' says I.

"The naval officer looked at me, with never a smile, though he must ha' been grinnin' on the inside.

"'Oh!' says he. 'Got your papers, Captain?'

"I showed 'em.

"'Curious,' says he, 'I could have sworn that I saw your schooner leave the wreck less than an hour ago.'

"'Must ha' been some o' the Florida beachcombers, sir,' says I, 'looks like they've been lootin' her.'

"'Some one has, that's sure,' says he. 'We'll have to make an inquiry into the matter. But I presume that I must accept your statement that you are the first wreck-master aboard.'

"'There's no one will dispute it,' says I.

"No one ever did, either. 'Red-Cap' couldn't, without admitting to the loot. As for the inquiry, the court ruled that the wreck had been plundered by 'persons unknown' and that, otherwise, the usual proportion of cargo salvage belonged to me."

"But the crew, Father?" queried Captain Voley. "Where were the captain and crew? They weren't all drowned, surely!"

"Not a one o' them," answered the old wrecker, cheerfully.

"Then what happened to them?"

"Soon after the *Black Pearl* struck," the "Admiral" explained, smoothly, "a fishing boat happened along and took off the crew. Bein' Americans, the craft ran 'em up to Norfolk, Virginia, so's they could get back to their homes, easy."

"To Norfolk! Why so far? Why not to Key West?"

The old wrecker winked portentously at the questioner.

"Son Jerry," he said, "ye ask too many questions. But, if ye want to know, they seemed to have a touch o' fever, poor fellows, an' were talkin' about 'Twisted Palm Light' havin'

moved. I thought they might need medical attention."

He grinned broadly.

"Decoy lights, by Jove!" exclaimed Captain Voley.

But the "Admiral" only chuckled and turned away, humming:

"Plenty o' lights wink white an' red,
Tellin' o' hidden dangers,
Change 'em, an' wreckers see loot ahead,
Fishes feed on the strangers."

With which he again winked portentously, this time at Latimer, and bit another chew from his plug of tobacco.

CHAPTER II

MASTER OF THE STORM

It was late in the afternoon when the *Moray,* with a full head of steam in her boilers, but under half-speed, picked her way through the intricate reefs towards "The Little Isaacs," reckoned among the worst of the many series of reefs which stud the whole length of the Bahama Islands.

The Bahamas form a chain of fifteen small islands and over a hundred islets, with not less than a thousand keys or cays, sand-banks, reefs and shoals, in all over five hundred miles long, running southeasterly from opposite the Everglades of Florida to Haiti. They form a most dangerous series of obstructions to navigation through the Windward Stairs and the Windward Passage, the best outlets from the Gulf of Mexico into the Atlantic Ocean.

The formation of the region increases its dangers. The coral reefs grow in height, and new coral atolls form continually. The sand-banks

shift. The shoals shallow without notice. Being in the earthquake zone, several rocky islets have been heaved up suddenly in the fairway. The tide-rips are violent and erratic. The Bahamas, too, are in the track of West Indian hurricanes, which average five or six a season. Dangerous as are these waters to a small ship, they are a ghastly menace to any large vessel.

With the opening of the Panama Canal, which diverts ever more and more traffic towards the Gulf of Mexico, the menace of the Bahamas increases. Even the most complete system of lights and buoys cannot protect a vessel caught in a hurricane in such terribly treacherous waters. A certain proportion of wrecks is inevitable, and the wrecker or salver becomes a factor of the highest value and importance to shipping.

Where large steamers are concerned, wrecking has utterly changed. All such vessels carry wireless apparatus, and, when stranded, send a radiogram to the nearest big port. Great wrecking companies, with a fleet of tugs and equipment costing up to a half a million dollars, will endeavor to save the vessel as well as the cargo. Such work is far beyond the powers of the wrecking schooners of the Black Fleet, and

even of the small wrecking tugs, such as the *Moray*.

There are many vessels on the sea, however, which are not large steamers equipped with wireless. These range all the way from a small American coasting schooner to a full-rigged ship sailing under the Norwegian flag because she is so unseaworthy that the British Board of Trade will no longer pass her. There may be, also, those homeless vagabonds of the sea, "tramp" steamers, mere shells of rusty iron with limping engines, on the hulls of which Davy Jones knocks continually. Of such craft the reefs of the Bahamas still reap a harvest, and in the salving of them much of the old wrecking system still prevails.

Wrecking schooners then, as now, cruised as consorts, each vessel seeking a wreck independently. Sometimes, if the wreck were small or the cargo not of any great value, one or two schooners could do all the salvage work. The profits, however, were divided among the consort vessels, even if they had not been there.

In the case of a derelict, which is a vessel abandoned by her captain and officers, the first wreck-master (holding a Master's certificate and

registry as a Master-Wrecker in Nassau) aboard the craft had the right to decide all matters dealing with the operations of salvage.

In the case of a vessel on the reefs and "in distress," a wreck-master was empowered to make what terms he could with the captain, and, after such agreement was made, the wreck-master took charge. A captain was not compelled to deal with the first wreck-master who arrived, but could bargain with others, if he pleased. Many ugly sea-fights arose over this.

A vessel stranded on a reef, but which its captain declared not to be in distress, could not be regarded as a case for salvage. Several cases occurred, however, in which a wreck-master, knowing the conditions of the reefs better than a ship-captain, took charge of a wrecked vessel in spite of the captain's protests, and saved crew and cargo. The Vice-Admiralty Court, in most cases, supported the wreck-masters in this.

The responsibilities of the wreck-master were great. His first duty was to save the crew; his second, to save the vessel, if possible; his third, to salve as much of the cargo as could be done. Often—indeed, generally—this work had to be done in a howling gale and a maddened sea,

within a few fathoms of the hungry coral fangs from which a bigger and more powerful craft had not been able to escape. It meant hours—even days—of work within a hand's-breadth of death by drowning or being mangled on the rocks. If any lives were lost, after the wreck-master took charge, he must answer for it at the official inquiry, and, in almost every case, representatives of the ship's owners protested because more of the cargo had not been salved, no matter what the condition of reef and sea. A wreck-master, therefore, had to protect himself before the courts as skilfully as before the rage of the tempest.

All salved goods were delivered at Nassau and there either sold by auction or held at the owner's disposition after an estimated value had been put on them by the Vice-Admiralty Court. There was much injustice here. As all the Bahamans were in league with the wreckers, foreign owners of vessels were entirely at the mercy of the islanders.

A worse feature of the old days was "collusive wrecking." Under this evil system, the captain of a vessel with a valuable cargo would make an arrangement with a certain wrecker,

before he sailed, that, on such and such a day, he would run his vessel on a pre-determined reef. As the wrecker did not have to lose time searching for this wreck, as it would occur on a reef near deep water where the handling of the cargo was easy, and as he was sure of having the first claim, the wrecker could afford to share his gains with the dishonest captain. Within a space of three years, forty-seven cases were proved in the courts to have been of this swindling character. Of course, in all such cases proved, both the wreck-masters and the captains lost their certificates.

"Ol' Admiral Voley's" conceptions of right and wrong in wrecking were peculiar to his time. He regarded "collusive wrecking" as unfair to the owners, since he seemed to regard his business as a tussle of wits between ship-captain and wrecker. Yet he would erect false lights to lead ships astray, move buoys from their moorings, give false information, and bribe pilots and helmsmen to run a ship ashore.

"If a skipper ain't watchin' his course in these waters," was his explanation, one time, "he deserves to have his ship ashore!"

Yet, once a vessel had struck, the "Admiral"

would spare neither himself nor his men to save life, ship, or cargo, or all three. If the wreck were a derelict, he would allow no petty stealing. If the master of the ship was aboard, why, he deemed it the latter's business to keep an eye on his cargo. He was, in short, " a fine old wrecker of the old-time days."

Captain Jerry Voley, his son, owner of the *Moray,* held to modern ways. His wrecking tug, though small, was powerfully engined. He had pulled many a vessel off a reef and, using wreck-mats, had towed her to a port or beached her, vessels which his father would have unloaded and abandoned. He scorned the unlawful practices of false lights or shifted buoys, but, when it came to a bargain, he was a harder man to deal with, even, than the "Admiral." He lacked the adventurous fire of the older man. He would not risk the *Moray* too close to danger, even to save life, and he would only salvage such cargo as could be reached in comparative safety.

Latimer, again, had ideas far more modern than those of his father, and, in his heart of hearts, he regarded his grandfather as little other than a pirate, though he admired the piratic strain, too. A couple of years before, a large

steamer had sunk in shallow water, not far from North Biminis, and a big New York wrecking company had come down with a fleet of tugs, pumping vessels, pontoons and modern equipment, and in nine days' work had raised the huge craft and floated her off to dry dock.

This had fired Latimer's ambition. He was eager to become, not a wrecker like his grandfather, not even a salver, like his father, but a real modern wrecking and salvage engineer. Hence his grandfather's taunt about being a "nursemaid" to ships.

The *Moray,* now, was coming close to "The Little Isaacs" and the "Admiral" went to the chart-house to take the wheel himself. His eyes were dim for near sight, so that he could read but with difficulty, but for long distances he could see better than a younger man.

As they rounded a key with a few straggling palms on it, the wrecked ship could be seen. She was a barque and had struck heavily, her foremast and maintopmast having gone by the board. Her bows were stove in and she lay bow-on with a heavy list to starboard, pounding heavily on the jagged reef.

"Total wreck, eh?" was the "Admiral's"

comment, as he squinted at her with a practised eye.

"All depends on the cargo," put in Captain Jerry. "I might pull her off if she had fruit or timber aboard."

The old wrecker spat out of the chart-house window in derision, but made no reply. He was steadying down to an intense concentration of the water.

"Stand by both bow anchors. Eight fathom. Put two men at each, Son Jerry," he warned.

The captain bawled the orders and went back to the chart, looking anxious, for his father was taking the *Moray* right on the very edge of where reefs were marked although apparently deep water lay to starboard. Once he made as though to speak, but checked himself.

Slight as the movement was, the "Admiral" saw it, and smiled grimly.

"Smooth water to starboard, Son Jerry?"

"Ay, Father."

"Watch sharp, as we slide by."

He threw the wheel over sharply, and the *Moray,* built for such work, turned as on a pivot.

"Now!" came the warning.

Captain Jerry and Latimer leaned over the starboard rail, and there, rising sheer from the dark water, was a sharp-fanged reef, with three or four knobs on it, just like barrels. It had an eerie look, for, owing to some trick of current, the water whirled around it almost without spray.

"'The Devil's Kegs'!" cried Latimer.

"Ay!"

There was a pause of a few seconds, then:

"Half speed astern! Ready with the anchors!"

The telegraph indicator to the engine-room rang sharply.

"Let go!" roared the "Admiral."

The chains rattled in the hawse-holes.

"I hope they find holding-ground, Dad," said Latimer, anxiously, looking at the hungry "Little Isaacs" not thirty fathoms away, and the wrecked barque pounding on them, a cable's length astern.

"The old man wouldn't have dropped anchors unless he knew just where they were going," said the Captain, reassuringly. "You don't need to worry, Lat, any time he's aboard. He's dead right, too, I'd have run slap into the

'Devil's Kegs' if I'd come in here myself. It's just like him, not to have marked them on the chart!"

By this time the "Admiral" had returned from the bow, where he had gone to make sure that the anchors were holding.

"Ye can get yer boat out, Son Jerry," he said, "an' make yer bargain with yon skipper."

"Don't you want to come along and take charge, Father?"

The old wrecker shook his head.

"I'm quartermaster this trip," he grinned. "I jest didn't want to see ye spike the *Moray* on the 'Devil's Kegs.' Go ahead! The skipper seems to be gettin' excited." He squinted up at the sky. "He's got reason, too. There's dirty weather comin'. Look lively, Son Jerry, this is a bad place to get out of, if she begins to breeze up!"

The boat was over the side and the Captain and Latimer aboard in about a hundred seconds. Six Blacks—probably the six finest oarsmen in the islands, for it was reason for boasting to be one of a Voley crew—bent to their reinforced ash oars. A couple of minutes' pulling brought them abreast of the wreck.

"Stand by!"

A pause.

"Starboard all!"

The rowlocks creaked under the strain as the men on one side backed water and, on the other, pulled. The little boat spun round like a tee-totum, her nose a foot from the black and weathered coral. She missed by a few inches the tangled mass of spars and rigging which was banging madly on the reef-edge, and shot out to sea with a deep scratch along her gunwale where a jagged spur had almost caught her.

But, in that second when her stern was to the reef, both Latimer and the Captain had leaped for the wreckage. Spars and rigging were heaving in a smother of foam and a misstep meant death, but neither father nor son was afraid of reef or surf, and a quick scramble brought them both on the barque's deck.

The crew, which was huddled in the waist of the ship, rushed aft as the wrecker clambered aboard, shouting gutturally. The mate, lean and powerful, with a belaying pin in his hand, stood at the weather poop ladder and the men came no farther.

Heaving and crashing, her tortured timbers

groaning, the ship lurched heavily, proving to Captain Voley's experienced senses that there was buoyancy in her still. The spray drove as high as the lower cross-trees and the roar of the surf was deafening. The situation would have been terrifying to any other boy, but Latimer had accompanied his father constantly, ever since the latter had bought the *Moray,* and wrecks, even the most dangerous, were to him little more than a matter of business.

"Afternoon, Captain!" shouted the wreck-master, at the top of his lungs. "You picked a bad place to strike!"

The skipper of the barque, a heavy gross-featured man, with black eyebrows making almost a straight black line across his forehead, scowled.

"What do ye call this place?" he shouted back.

"'The Little Isaacs'!"

"Reckon it's the end o' the *Ocean Fay,* then!" the skipper rejoined, for the reefs were notorious.

"What have you got aboard?"

"Fruit, sugar, bark, and hat-straw, bound from Maracaibo to Baltimore."

The wreck-master thought for a moment, scanning the lie of the ship.

"Might be worse!" he shouted back. "I'll do my best to tow you off and beach you on a lee shore for two thousand pounds."

The skipper of the barque made a gesture of indignant denial.

"Ten thousand dollars, ye pirate!" he yelled. "That's robbery!"

"Get her off yourself, then," retorted Captain Voley, turning on his heel.

He waved for the boat to come in.

At that instant, the crew of the barque made a rush up the poop steps. The left fist of the mate shot out like the kick of a mule, and, almost at the same instant, he brought the belaying pin across the neck of a second man. Both fell.

"Bad business, that, Captain!" said the wreck-master sternly. "This ship's 'in distress.'"

The black-browed man stepped forward, truculently, a revolver in his hand.

"I'm still captain of this ship!" he roared. "I didn't ask ye to come on board an' ye can get back among the sharks, where ye belong!"

"I'm going," answered the wreck-master.

"But when you signal for me to come on board again, it'll cost you three and maybe four thousand pounds. There's a norther breezing up. And so I've warned you! Come, Latimer."

They climbed down the ship's side, but just before reaching the wreckage, Captain Voley looked up once more.

"Two thousand pounds? Take it or leave it."

"No!"

The boat shot in.

The wreck-master poised on a heaving spar and leaped, landing fair in the boat.

Latimer's foot slipped, as he was leaping, and he fell short. He was a master swimmer and dived through a comber, coming up beside the boat. His father grabbed him by the collar and dragged him in.

"Clumsy work!" was his only comment.

Nothing more was said until they got aboard the *Moray,* when Captain Voley told the whole story to the "Admiral," the latter making growling comments all the way.

"If it was goin' to be fair weather," said the old wrecker at last, "I'd let 'em stay there till they was sick an' scared, an' ready to crawl on their knees to be taken off. But the glass has

been high an' jumpy all mornin', Son Jerry, an' she's dropping slow an' steady now. There won't be anybody aboard yon craft, to-morrow mornin'; they'll all ha' gone to Kingdom Come."

"I told them there was a norther coming," the captain of the *Moray* answered.

"Can ye pull her off, do ye think?"

"Sure of it," said the younger man. "Cut away the wreckage, lighten her by getting main and mizzenmasts off her, blast off a couple of small spurs of coral which are holding her stern, and she'll come. That is, if I can get water enough under the *Moray* for a straight pull."

"Go ahead an' do it, then."

Captain Voley hesitated.

"He backed up his 'No!' with a gun!" the younger man objected.

The "Admiral" moved forward one shoulder as a man gathers his muscles for a blow.

"Scared ye, eh?"

"Well," the other responded, "I didn't see any use in getting shot."

"I'd like to see him point a gun at me!"

The old "Admiral" considered for a moment longer and then roared out:

"Alive there, ye black lubbers! Get out that boat! I'm goin' aboard."

"But, Father ——"

"Ye're goin' to say I'm ninety an' can't get aboard her, eh? Lat, come along!" Then, to the men, "Are ye ready there?"

"All ready, Admiral!"

Tottering, yet active, the old wrecker got into the boat. Latimer followed.

At the wreck, the boatmen pursued the same tactics, but timed the work more carefully, giving a better chance to get foothold on the wreckage of floating spars. It was hard work for a man ninety years of age, but experience and skill made up for lack of strength. A few deft springs, and the old wrecker was on the deck of the barque.

"Where's this bucko mate!" he roared.

His quick eye fell on the lanky figure, still standing by the poop rail. A few steps along the heaving deck brought him face to face with the man, at whom he glared with such ferocity and such authority that the bruiser gave back a step.

Then, with a snort of contempt, the old man's gripe descended on the belaying pin. With a

quick twist, he jerked the pin from the mate's hand and sent it spinning into the sea.

"A fine bucko mate ye are!" he sneered. "I've half a notion to put ye across my knee!"

Deliberately he turned his back on the man, while the jeers of the crew rose high.

Then he walked up to the skipper, a man of more than his size and half his age, and shook his fist in the other's face.

"I'm Voley!" he boomed, his voice sonorous above the roar of the surf. "'Admiral' Voley, ye understand! An' I'm wreck-master here, an' in full charge o' this craft. An' get that through yer thick skull as quick as the Lord'll let ye!"

The other broke in:

"As long as I'm captain of this ship ——"

The old wrecker's answering bellow fairly stunned the skipper out of speech.

"Captain, ye call yerself! An' ye run a ship in fair weather on a reef a baby could see! Captain! An' when a wreck-master comes aboard ye, with yer vessel in distress, ye tell him to get off yer worm-eaten wind-jammer an' refuse to let him save the lives o' yer men!"

He wagged a menacing finger in front of the

black-browed skipper, who strove in vain to get a word in edgewise.

"Ye'll do well if I don't have ye hauled up in Nassau an' have yer Master's certificate taken from ye for gross incompetence an' neglect o' duty. Ay! An' manslaughter, if a man aboard o' ye gets lost!"

Again the skipper strove to speak and again the old "Admiral" roared him down.

"Me! Ye ink-marked putty imitation of a sailorman! Ye'd dare talk back to me! Get an' hide yerself in the chain-locker, lest I should be tempted to say something!"

The skipper blustered, but before that withering fury of invective, he could say nothing. Nor was there anything that he could do.

He knew "Admiral" Voley by name, as every one in those seas knew him, and he was well aware that, if the old wrecker ever went on the stand in court and swore that the captain of the *Ocean Fay* had caused loss of life aboard his craft because of a salvage price, the skipper would be broken from his command. The old wrecker's threat was not an idle one.

"I'll take your offer of ten thousand dollars, then," the skipper conceded, weakly.

"My offer, ye two-for-a-penny-huckster! I've made ye no offer! Ye refused a good offer an' ye'll stick by that refusal! I'll take ye off the reef when I like, an' how I like, an' for how much I like, an' ye'll pay!"

He whirled on the crew.

"Men!" he roared. "Wreck-Master in command! Get out the axes an' clear away the wreckage. An' you, ye empty-gutted bean-pole," he snarled, turning to the mate, "get to work with the men an' show ye're some good, anyhow!"

For one split second the mate hesitated. He was not a coward, but it was not in him to strike at a man ninety years of age. Moreover, since the skipper of the *Ocean Fay* had been forced to yield up the right of command, defiance of the wreck-master's orders would come near to being mutiny. He did not need to ask himself if the "Admiral" would press the charge. Under that fierce eye, there was nothing to do but obey. He quailed and went forward with the men.

It was characteristic of the negro boatmen of the *Moray* that they had not waited for further orders from the "Admiral." They were confi-

dent that, once on board the wreck, he would take charge. While this brief interchange was proceeding on the heaving deck of the *Ocean Fay,* the boat had pulled back to the *Moray* and was already returning with Captain Voley on board. He, also, had taken it for granted that the old wrecker would arrange matters.

"See what he wants, Lat!" said the "Admiral," as his eye caught a glimpse of the coming boat.

Latimer ran to the stern and looked over. Captain Voley held up two bulky bundles.

"He's got the explosives, Grap," the boy answered, at the same time waving his hand to his father to show that he understood.

"Look lively an' lay them, then. We've got to get off this reef afore dark." He sniffed the air. "Wind's comin', an' comin' fast."

He hurried forward to urge the crew to quicker work, though the men were working like furies.

"Get yerself a life-line, Lat!" he warned.

The boy nodded, cut off the loose coil of the gaff topsail halliards, made fast one end, and, passing the other under his arms, made a snug bowline, a knot which would hold but could not

tighten on him. By the time this was done, the old wrecker was back.

"Over ye go!" he ordered. "They've got kedges out, an' are waitin'. I'll pay out the line."

As the "Admiral" said, two small kedge anchors had been dropped from the boat with a line to each and a man to each line. At Captain Voley's word, they slackened the lines, inch by inch, bringing the boat to the very edge of the reef. Latimer, beaten and half-drowned by the surf, waited on the reef, impatient for the time to do his duty.

The captain of the *Moray* handed the boy four charges of explosive, which the lad jammed under the two spurs of coral which were holding the stern of the ship. He wedged them so that they could not move. The four heavily insulated wires were roughly knotted together, and thrown back to the boat. One of the boatmen attached these to a small buoy and fastened the buoy to the line of one of the kedge anchors, casting this off from the boat. Thus the wires were held moderately taut, but kept from chafing against the reef, which might easily rub through the insulation.

At a sign from his father, Latimer climbed on board.

Meanwhile, the old "Admiral" had been busy. The wreckage dangling over the side had been cut away. The mainmast had been cut more than half through and half the shrouds severed. Two men were already at work cutting through the mizzenmast.

The instant that Captain Voley got on board the *Moray,* he, too, leapt into instant action.

Three piercing whistles from the tug announced that he was ready to up-anchor.

Already sharp puffs of wind were coming down from the north, and the sky was getting murky. There was no time to lose.

Full steam had been kept on the tug and the exhaust was hissing violently.

Under Captain Voley's admirable handling and the work of a thrice-picked crew, both anchors lifted simultaneously, and under full speed astern, the *Moray* edged her way round the "Devil's Kegs," and into clear water, directly opposite the wreck.

Out from the tug shot the boat again, the coxswain, a burly negro, in charge. In the boat

were coil upon coil of two thin but strong hemp lines. Picking up the rope of the kedge, for greater surety, and paying out back to the reef, the coxswain heaved the line clear on board the *Ocean Fay*. Latimer caught it, and started to haul in.

"Aft here, four o' ye!" bellowed the "Admiral."

The men ran.

" Haul, ye snails! Haul like there was a keg o' rum at t'other end! Haul!"

The crew, realizing that they were working for their lives, and realizing that the old wrecker was a sailorman from truck to keelson, hauled with a will, led the line to the capstan, thrust the bars in and started round at a fast clip. The small hemp line had been made fast to a heavy cable-laid line, four inches in diameter. It would be heavy hauling, but the incoming surf carried the cable towards them, and the pawls of the capstan clinked merrily. The end of the cable came aboard.

While the cable was being hauled in, the boatswain had heaved a second line, which Latimer also caught, and, with two of the men to aid him, he hauled aboard the ropes which were spliced

into the cringles at each corner of the wreck-mats. These were made of four-ply tarred canvas, specially prepared.

A whistle from the *Moray* announced that all was ready aboard the tug.

The "Admiral" held both arms above his head, without moving, as much as to say,

"Wait!"

Then, turning to the crew, orders hurtled forth from him like cannon-shot, but each one clear and definite. While some of the men hacked at the mizzenmast, others cut free the bowsprit and jib-boom, which fell with a crash on the reef. Four others stood by the ropes of the wreck-mats, which lay under the vessel. Two made fast the towing cable to the stump of the mizzenmast.

The tug's boat, meanwhile, having heaved the two lines aboard, had picked up the ends of insulated cable and snapped them into a water-tight junction, connected with wires leading to a battery on the tug.

The "Admiral" stepped back to the stern and waved his arms violently to denote:

"All ready!"

The tug responded with two whistles.

"Stand by to cut all, next time she whistles!" the wreck-master bellowed.

The men stood with axes poised.

The tug gave a long shrill whistle. It was followed almost immediately by a dull, rending explosion which tore away the spurs of coral and released the stern.

The eight axes fell as though wielded by one man. The mizzenmast lurched and pitched overboard.

A column of water rose under the barque. The stern, lightened by the loss of the mizzenmast, rose high.

The cable tautened.

The *Moray,* under full steam, with her powerful engines and double screws, tugged on the wreck, which, for that second, was half afloat. With a fearful cracking, as her copper sheathing ripped away and her planking splintered, and with a jerk which threw nearly every man aboard her off his feet, the *Ocean Fay* grated over the reef-edge and plunged stern-foremost into the sea.

The sailors scrambled to their feet, rushed to the lines holding the corners of the wreck-mats, and, as the bows of the vessel passed over them,

Courtesy of Engineering Magazine.

AN AMERICAN LINER ON THE ROCKS.

The *Paris*, trapped on the death-dealing Manacles, was freed by blasting away the rocks on which she was impaled.

Courtesy of Merritt & Chapman Wrecking Co.

THE FOUR-MASTED SHIP *Peter Rickmers* AS SHE APPEARED AFTER STRIKING.

Courtesy of Merritt & Chapman Wrecking Co.

APPEARANCE OF SHIP ONE WEEK LATER AFTER A HARD GALE.
WHERE THE ELEMENT OF TIME IS ESSENTIAL.

hauled taut. Once in place, the outward pressure of the water held them fast.

The patches of tarred canvas, while more than a hundred square feet in size, did not cover all the hole nor keep the ship from leaking—she had been too badly mauled for that—but they helped. Moreover, as Captain Voley had judged, the buoyancy of the light wooden crates in which the fruit was packed, and of the bark and hat-straw, more than compensated for the soggy weight of the bags of sugar.

The first plunge was a moment of tension, for no one could say how the *Ocean Fay* would float. She sank like a lump, then slowly righted and rose, lying a little more than awash. Thus she drew far more water than any ship has a right to draw in those narrow and often shallow channels. The captain of the *Moray,* however, was quite at home, the moment he had got clear of the "Devil's Kegs."

There was no lingering, for, despite the frantic speed with which everything had been done, evening was creeping on, the darkness coming early since the sky was clouding fast. The puffs of the "norther" were becoming squally, raising a choppy sea, which would have snapped

the cable or torn the towing posts out of the *Moray* if the tug-boat captain had not put out so long a tow-line.

The "Admiral" himself stood at the stern, directing the two men at the wheel, for though the *Ocean Fay* was being towed stern-first, the rudder must be kept amidships or put over to port or starboard to try and keep the foundering vessel from sluing too heavily.

The squalls of the "norther" now came more often and more violently, and "Belaying Pin Key" was still three miles away.

Using every ounce of pressure, the *Moray* could barely tow the water-logged craft at three miles an hour. She was sinking lower and lower as the water soaked more and more through the cargo.

Even the old wrecker grew anxious. If the *Ocean Fay* sank in deep water, there would be even less chance of salvage than if she had stayed on the reef. Still, the "Admiral" had confidence in his son's judgment.

The *Moray* puffed ahead gallantly, and the *Ocean Fay* followed soddenly.

If the cable should break!

It held.

Slowly the long outline of "Belaying Pin Key" loomed up, and, half an hour later, they were in the lee of it, and free from the squalls. Twenty minutes further towing in the deepening dusk brought them to a little bay.

The *Moray* dropped back, her steam winch gathering in the slack of the cable, and, with the tow-line shortened to a few fathoms, she steamed straight for the shore. Drawing but a few feet of water herself, she ran far in toward the beach, until, with a slip and a lurch, the deep-floating *Ocean Fay* grounded on soft bottom.

The old "Admiral" threw both arms aloft, as a signal, and, at the instant, the indicator of the *Moray* rang to "Stop!"

A wrecker's domination and a salver's skill had saved vessel, cargo, and crew.

CHAPTER III

CAPTURED BY PIRATES

NEXT morning, the "norther" was shrieking overhead, but the *Ocean Fay* lay aground and well protected in the little bay in the lee of "Belaying Pin Key." The *Moray* had steamed back to Nassau, to gather some of the schooners of the Black Fleet for the salving of the cargo, and also to send a cablegram to the owners.

The "Admiral," as wreck-master in charge, had stayed aboard the beached vessel and had bidden Latimer stay also. He did not trust either the skipper or the mate of the *Ocean Fay*, for, though he had salvaged the skipper's vessel and saved the lives of the mate and crew, the two officers of the ship bore him black enmity for the rough treatment of the day before.

Accordingly, the old "Admiral," despite his ninety years of age, would not go down into the cabin. He had some of the crew rig him up a

small awning on the deck, and appropriating most of the cabin bedding for his own use, lay down to sleep. Latimer took the first four-hour watch, to see that no one came near. At midnight he waked his grandfather, who took the next four-hour watch, after which Latimer resumed guard.

Soon after six bells in the morning, one of the sailors, who had shown himself especially alert the day before, came up to where Latimer was keeping watch, and, jerking a thumb in the direction of the sleeping man, asked mysteriously:

"Is this here the real 'Admiral' Voley o' Biminis?"

"Of course," answered Latimer. "Didn't you hear him say so? Why?"

"I was a-wonderin'," said the sailor, "if he was game to help a poor chap find an old wreck with treasure in it that was sunk south o' here, nigh a hundred years ago.

"I heard, onc't, when I was in Key West, that the gang o' pirates which captured the American schooner *Exertion,* out o' Boston, had stowed their loot in an old hulk, which was anchored in a mangrove lagoon. But they hadn't sense enough to see if the old hulk was copper-

sheathed, an' the worms got after her, so she sank in about four fathom o' water. The pirates didn't dare get outside divers, who might split on 'em, an' they couldn't any of 'em dive theirselves, so there the hulk an' the treasure lies still."

The "Admiral," a light sleeper, had been awakened by the murmur of voices and had been listening. He now turned on one elbow and faced the sailor.

"Do ye know where she lies?" he asked.

"No, 'Admiral,' sir, I don't. But onc't I got hold of a bit o' printin' which tells the story o' Cap'n Lincoln, who was captured by them pirates, an' it describes the reefs so's any one what knows West Indies waters could find her easy enough.

"I've been reckoning, sir, for some time, on comin' here to the Bahamas, an' findin' some wrecker who'd know the reefs. Twenty years I've been lookin' for a chance to get the Bahamas, an' here I get thrown up against the best wrecker of 'em all. It's Providence, that's what it is!"

The old man fixed him with a penetrating glance.

"Were ye at the wheel o' the *Ocean Fay* when she struck?"

The sailor looked confused.

"Well, sir, not to be a-deceivin' of you, I was."

"So!" The "Admiral" hesitated for a moment, then continued. "I see, now. Ye probably had a sudden fit o' forgettin' the course ye were told to steer."

He held up his hand authoritatively, to stop the sailor's reply.

"Mind ye now," he warned, "I don't want to know anything about it! I don't even want to know if ye ever met at Key West a Biminis man named Jules. If ye did, forget it!"

The sailor nodded comprehension.

"Have ye got it in for the skipper?" queried the old wrecker.

"He an' his blue-nose (Nova Scotian) mate are officers a self-respectin' A. B. (Able Seaman) wouldn't want to sail under," was the virtuous reply.

"Ye hail from Key West yerself?"

"Yes, sir."

"There's more'n one o' ye mixed up in this, I'm thinkin'?"

"Two more, sir."

"Do they know about this treasure?"

"No, sir, they just wanted to get even with the skipper an' the mate."

"Very good. Ye know enough to keep yer tongue between your teeth?"

"Yes, sir. I don't talk."

Latimer looked from one to the other, beginning to grasp the plot. From the start, he had felt that there was something strange about the wreck of the *Ocean Fay*. He recalled his father's pointed remark about Jules, that it was "easy enough to find wrecks of one's own making."

"Let's see this printed paper ye're talkin' about," said the "Admiral."

The sailor felt in his pocket and brought out a small wad of oil-skin. This he unfolded and handed to the old wrecker. It contained a number of pages torn from an old book, in the small pages and fine print of fifty years ago, now become blurred and indistinct from long carrying and frequent handling.

"Lat," said the old man, handing him the papers, "yer eyes are younger'n mine. Read it aloud."

Carefully Latimer unfolded the pages and ran his eye over them.

"It seems to be an account taken from a daily log, Grap," he explained, "and is written by Captain Lincoln of the schooner *Exertion.* She was bound from Boston to Trinidad, with a cargo of provisions."

He turned over the first page.

"There isn't much to begin with, just notes of the voyage. There's a big black mark here, though."

"I made that," put in the sailor. "The story o' the pirates begins there."

"Read from there, Lat," said the old wrecker.

"All right, Grap," the boy answered, and he began to read:[1]

"Nothing remarkable occurred during the passage, except much bad weather, until my capture, which was as follows:

"On Monday, December 17, 1821, we were making good headway with fine breezes from the eastward. At daybreak, saw some of the islands

[1] This is an authentic record of one of the last group of pirates which operated in the Spanish Main. Captain Lincoln's story is very little known, and is of great value as one of the few accounts of capture by pirates in which a daily record of the incidents was kept.

northwards of Cape Cruz, called Keys—stood along northwest; everything now seemed favorable for a happy termination of our voyage.

"At 3 o'clock, P. M., saw a sail coming round the Keys into a channel called Boca de Cavalone on the chart. She made directly for us, with all sail set, sweeps on both sides—the wind being light—and was soon near enough for us to discover about forty men on her deck, armed with blunderbusses, cutlasses, long knives and dirks. She carried two carronades, one a twelve-pounder and the other a six-pounder. She was a schooner, showing the Patriot blue-white-and-blue flag of the Republic of Mexico.

"I thought it prudent not to try to resist them, should they be pirates, having a crew of but seven men and only five muskets, accordingly ordered the arms and ammunition to be stowed away in as secret a place as possible. Then I suffered her to speak us, hoping and believing that a republican flag indicated both honor and friendship from those who bore it. But how great was my astonishment when the schooner having approached very near us, hailed in English and ordered me to heave my boat out immediately and come on board with my papers.

Accordingly my boat was hove out, but filled before I could get into her.

"I was then ordered to tack ship and lay by for the pirate's boat to board me, which was done by Bolidar, their first lieutenant, with six or eight pirates, armed with as many of the above-mentioned weapons as they could well sling about their bodies.

"They drove me into the boat and two of them rowed me to their privateer, as they called their vessel, where I shook hands with her commander, Captain Jonnia, a Spaniard. Before even looking at my papers, he ordered Bolidar, his lieutenant, to take charge of the *Exertion* and to follow the pirate schooner, the *Mexican,* in back of the Key they had left, which was done.

"At 6 o'clock, P. M., the *Exertion* was anchored in eleven feet of water, near their vessel, by an island which they called Twelve Leagues Key—called Key Largo on the chart—about thirty or thirty-five leagues from Trinidad.

"After this strange conduct, my papers were examined by a Scotchman who went by the name of Nickols, their sailing master. He spoke good English, had a countenance rather pleasing, although his beard and mustache had a frightful

appearance. He gave me back my papers, saying:

"'Take good care of them, I am afraid you have fallen into bad hands.'

"The pirate's boat was then sent to the *Exertion* with more men. Part of these were left on board as a prize crew, the rest returned with three of my crew whom they treated with drink and offered equal shares if they would enlist with them, but could not prevail.

"I then requested permission to go again on board my vessel, which was granted. When I got on board I was invited below by Bolidar, where I found they had emptied the case of liquors and had drunk so much as to make them desperately abusive. I was permitted to lie down in my berth.

"Bolidar pretended friendship. But I found him, as I suspected, a consummate hypocrite. Indeed, his very looks indicated it. He was a stoutly built man, of a dark swarthy complexion, with keen ferocious eyes, huge whiskers, and beard under his chin and on his lips four or five inches long. His appearance was most truly terrific. He could talk some in English and had a most lion-like voice.

Courtesy of J. B. Lippincott Co.

THE CORSAIR BOARDS THE PAPAL GALLEY.

Uruj the Great throws his oars overboard to force his men to fight the huge and well-armed ships. Algerian coast waters hold many treasure-ships as yet unrecovered.

Courtesy of Technical World Magazine.

IMPALED ON JAGGED REEFS.

Her bottom torn to pieces, wreckers will still find a fortune in the cargo and fittings of the wrecked barque.

"The next day I was told their captain had a supposed commission from the Republic of Mexico authorizing him to seize all cargoes of provisions bound to any royalist port. I requested him to examine my papers thoroughly, and he would find that my cargo was all American property taken on at Boston and consigned to an American in Trinidad.

"But the captain would not take this trouble. He ordered both vessels under way immediately and commenced beating up amongst the Keys most of the day, the wind being light.

"They now sent their boat aboard the *Exertion* and commenced plundering her. They inquired for spirits, wine, liquor, etc., and were told that they had already taken all that there was on board. But, not satisfied, they proceeded to search the cabins and forecastle, ripped up the floor of the latter, found some boxes of bottled cider and began drinking it with such freedom that a violent quarrel arose between officers and men, which came very near ending in bloodshed.

"Wednesday, 19th, commencd with moderate easterly winds. We went on beating towards the northeast, the pirate's boats fre-

quently going on board the *Exertion* for food, which was used with great waste and extravagance. They kept me aboard the *Mexican* and gave me food and drink, but of bad quality. The place assigned to me to eat was covered with dirt and vermin. . . . We came to anchor near a Key called by them Brigantine Key, where myself and mate were permitted to go ashore, but guarded by pirates.

"I soon returned to the *Mexican* and my mate to the *Exertion.* In the course of the day I had considerable conversation with Nickols, who appeared well disposed towards me. He lamented deeply his own situation. He told me 'those who had taken me were no better than pirates, and their end would be the halter, but,' he added, showing me a bottle of laudanum which he had found in my medicine chest, 'if we are taken, that shall cheat the hangman.'

"He stated he was at New Orleans last summer, and met one Captain Orgamer, a Frenchman, who had bought a small schooner and was going down to Mexico to get a privateering commission. Captain Orgamer made him liberal offers respecting shares, and promised him a sailing-master's berth. . . . They under-

took the transport of troops, and the vessel, having got a commission, was renamed the *Mexican.* They took some small prizes off Campeachy, and, afterwards, many more on the south coast of Cuba. By this time the crew was increased to nearly forty. They sailed up Manganeel Bay, where lay an English brig hailing from Jamaica.

"They seized this vessel, and, under Jonnia, a leading spirit among the Spaniards in the crew, began to act as pirates, though Captain Orgamer and Nickols protested. They mutinied openly, and, like so many ferocious bloodhounds, plundered the cabin stores, the captain's chest, took a hogshead of rum, a twelve-pound carronade, ammunition, rigging and sails. One sailor who resisted was beaten almost to death. Then they ordered Captain Orgamer ashore, and made Jonnia, who had led them in the mutiny, their captain. Nickols, as sailing master, was detained by force. Such was Nickols' story.

"On Thursday, 20th, we continued beating up, the wind being light. The pirate's boats were sent to the *Exertion* for more stores. It is impossible to give an account of the manners of

this crew, and, were it possible, it would not be expedient. In their appearance the pirates were terrific, all wearing black whiskers and long beards, the receptacles of dirt and vermin. They used continually the most profane language, had frequent quarrels. A few days before I was taken they had a stabbing match, and one man being near dead, they put him ashore at a fisherman's hut and left him there to perish. I saw the wound of another whose nose was split open. So great was their love of gambling that the Captain would play cards with the meanest man on board.

"Friday, 21st. After lying at anchor through the night in ten fathoms water, made sail and stood in to the eastward. By this time I was out of reckoning, having no quadrant, chart or books. . . .

"Saturday, 22nd. Both vessels under way standing to the eastward, they ran the *Exertion* aground on a bar, but, after throwing overboard her deck load, she was floated off. A pilot was sent to her, and she was run into a narrow creek between two keys, where they moored her head and stern, alongside the mangrove trees, sent down her yards and topmasts, and covered her

mastheads and shrouds with bushes to prevent her being seen by vessels which might pass that way. . . . I went aboard her and found her in a most filthy condition. . . . The swarms of mosquitoes and sand-flies made it impossible to get any sleep or rest.

"Sunday, 23rd. Early this morning, a large number of the pirates came on board the *Exertion,* threw out the long boat, broke open the hatches and took out considerable of the cargo, in search of rum or gin. . . . In the afternoon the boat returned with a pirogue, having on board the officers and seven men of a pirate vessel that had been chased ashore at Cape Cruz by a Spanish armed brig.

"Monday, 24th. The boat was manned and sent ashore to Principe, Cuba. The pirates had a man on board who was a partner of a merchant at that place, through whom cargoes are sold. Thus is this atrocious system of piracy carried on.

"Tuesday, 25th. Christmas Day! Still on board the *Exertion,* weather very calm and warm. . . . The irritating conduct of the pirates at this time can scarcely be imagined. The rest of the week passed in the same manner.

"Sunday, 30th. The beginning of more trouble! This day was never observed by the pirates. . . . When the day came, if they knew it, it was spent in gambling. . . . Early this morning, the merchant, as they called him, came with a large boat for the cargo.

"I was immediately ordered into the boat with my crew, not allowed any breakfast, and carried about three miles to a small island, out of sight of the *Exertion,* and left there by the side of a little pond of thick muddy water, which proved very brackish, with nothing to eat but a few biscuit. One of the boat's men told us the merchant was afraid of being recognized, and, when he had gone, the boat would return for us, but we had good reason to expect that they would deceive us, and passed the day in the utmost anxiety.

"At night, however, the boats came and took us again on board the *Exertion,* when we found that they had broken open our chests and taken all our clothes. . . . The little money I and my mate had, and some belonging to the owners, my mate had previously distributed about the cabin in three or four parcels. . . . One parcel in a butter pot they did not discover.

"Monday, 31st. We complained to them, expressing the necessity of having clothes to cover us, but might as well have appealed to the winds, nay better, for the latter would not have upbraided us in return.

"Tuesday, January 1st, 1822. A sad New Year's Day for us. Before breakfast, orders came for me to cut down the *Exertion's* rail and bulwarks on one side, for the pirates to heave their vessel out by and clean her bottom. On my hesitating a little they observed with great anger:

"'Very well, Captain, suppose you no do it quick, we do it for you.'

"Directly afterwards, another boat full of armed men came to the side, they jumped on deck with swords drawn and ordered all of us into her immediately. I stepped below, in hopes of getting something which would be of service to us, but the captain hallooed:

"'Get in the boat directly, or I will fire on you!'

"Thus compelled to obey, we, with four Spanish prisoners, were carried to a small, low island or Key of sand, in the shape of a half-moon and partly covered with mangrove trees,

which was about one mile from and in sight of my vessel.

"There they left us, nine of us, with a little bread, flour, fish, a little coffee and molasses, two or three kegs of brackish water, a pot unfit to cook in and an old sail for a covering. They then pushed off, saying:

"'We will come to see you in a day or two.'

"Selecting the best place, we spread the sail for an awning, but no place was free from sand-flies, mosquitoes, and the venomous snake, the santipee. Sometimes we found these crawling up the insides of our trousers, but fortunately no injury was received.

"This afternoon, the pirates hove their vessel out by the *Exertion,* and cleaned one side, using our paints, oil, etc., for the purpose.

"Wednesday, 2nd. The pirates hove out the *Mexican* and cleaned the other side. In the afternoon, their boat came and took two of the Spaniards to another island for water, and soon after returned with four kegs of poor unwholesome water, and left us, saying that they should not bring us provisions again for some time, as they were going away with goods from the prize, to be gone two or three days.

"About this time, one of my men began to be ill, his legs and body swelled considerably, but, having no medicine, I could not do much to relieve him.

"Thursday, 3rd. The pirates had dropped off from the *Exertion,* but kept their boats employed in bringing the cargo from her. They then got under way with the pirogue in tow, heavily loaded, leaving a guard on board the *Exertion.*

"Friday, 4th. Commenced with light winds and a hot sun. . . . At sunset a boat came and inquired if we wanted anything, but, instead of adding to our provisions, took away our molasses and pushed off.

"That night we found a leaking water cask and some pieces of plank on the beach, which we carefully laid up in the hopes of getting enough to make a raft.

"Saturday, 5th. Pirates again in sight coming from the eastward. They beat up alongside their prize and commenced loading. In the afternoon, Nickols came to us bringing with him two more prisoners, a Frenchman and a Scotchman, whom they had taken in a small sail-boat, coming from Trinidad to Manganeel. One of

these poor fellows was badly bruised, having just suffered a severe beating from Bolidar, with the broad side of a cutlass. The two Spaniards who were in the boat remained on board the pirate and afterwards joined the pirate crew.

"Sunday, 6th. The pirates were under way at sunrise, with a full load of the *Exertion's* cargo, going to Principe again to sell the freight, which was done readily for cash.

"Monday, 7th. The pirates brought more water, but, being very brackish, it was unfit for use. They sailed again in the afternoon, with the pirogue in tow, both having a full load.

"Wednesday, 9th and Thursday, 10th. Calm and very warm. The swarms of mosquitoes and sand-flies were intolerable.

"Friday, 11th. The pirates held a vendue on board wherein was sold everything remaining on board belonging to us and our fellow-prisoners.

"Saturday, 12th. The pirates remained alongside the *Exertion,* took the paints, old brushes, and gave their vessel a new coat of paint.

"About sunset, the pirates went out of the harbor on a cruise. Here we had been staying

day after day and night after night—apprehensions for our safety were much increased. What was to become of us?

"Monday, 14th. They again hove in sight. While passing our solitary island, they laughed at our misery, which was now almost insupportable. Soon after, Bolidar, with five men, well armed, came and demanded my watch. I pretended not to understand him, and he lifted his blunderbuss to fire. I was compelled to submit to this unlawful demand. He further said:

"'After to-morrow you shall go to your vessel.'

"Tuesday, 15th. Our Spanish fellow-prisoners warned us that 'after to-morrow' meant a to-morrow that would never come. But it did come—in what manner will soon be stated.

"Wednesday, 16th. One of their boats came to inquire if we had seen a boat pass by last night, for their small sloop-boat was gone and two men deserted. I told them 'No.' On their return, they manned three of their boats and sent them in different directions to search, but, at night, came back without finding either boat or men. They now took our old sail, which hitherto had somewhat sheltered us, to make, I sup-

pose, some small sail for their vessel. This rendered our nights more uncomfortable than before, for, in those islands, the night dews are very great.

"Thursday, 17th, was passed with great impatience. The *Exertion* having been unmoored and swung to her anchors, gave us some hopes of being restored to her, but we were disappointed.

"Friday, 18th. Commenced with brighter prospects of liberty; the pirates were employed with our schooner's shrouds, stays, etc. Almost we made sure that we were to be freed. . . . At almost the same moment, the axe was applied with the greatest dexterity to both her masts, and I saw them fall over the side! Here fell my hopes. I looked at my condition, and then thought of home.

"Our Spanish fellow-prisoners were so disappointed and alarmed that they recommended hiding, if possible, among the mangrove bushes, believing, as they said, that we should now certainly be put to death, or, what was worse, compelled to serve on board the *Mexican* as pirates.

"Little else, it is true, seemed left for us. At night we determined to adopt the plan of hid-

ing, although starvation stared us in the face. Yet we preferred that to instant death. The night was passed with sufficient anxiety. I took the first watch.

" Sunday, 19th. The pirates' large boat came for us. It being daylight and supposing that they could see us, we determined to stand our ground and await the result. They ordered us all into the boat, but left everything else, and rowed towards the *Exertion.*

" I now had some hopes of visiting my vessel again, but the pirates made sail, ran down, took us in tow, and stood out of the harbor. Bolidar afterwards took me, my mate, and two of my men on board, and gave us some coffee. . . . The captain kept at a distance, and forbade Nickols speaking to me.

" I observed that my mate, Mr. Brackett, was dejected, and asked him in a low tone what he thought was to be our fate. He answered:

" ' I cannot tell, but it appears to me that the worst is to come.'

" Soon after, we saw the captain and the officers whispering for some time in a private conference.

" When the palaver was over, their boat was

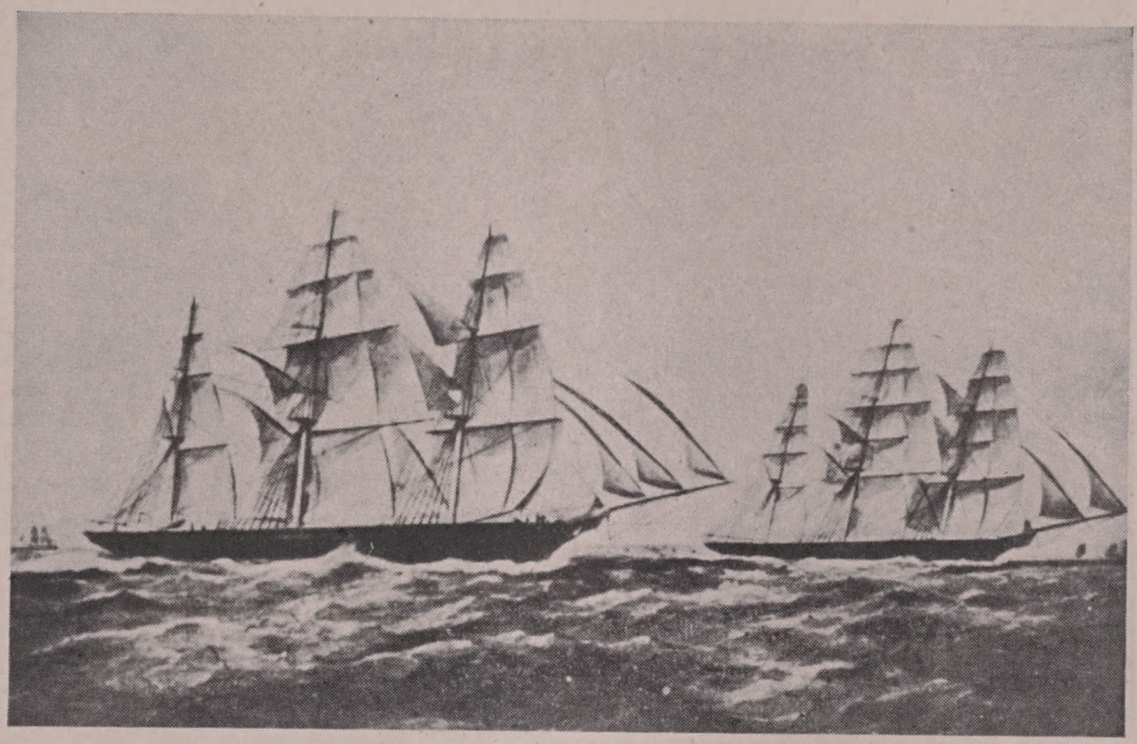
manned under command of Bolidar, and went to one of the Keys. On their return another conference took place.

"In the afternoon, though we knew not the doom which had been fixed for us, the captain was engaged with several of his men in gambling, in hopes to get back some of the five hundred dollars he had lost a few nights before. This made him unusually fractious.

"A little before sunset, he ordered us all into the large boat, with a supply of provisions and water, and to be put on shore. As I stepped into the boat, Nickols said:

"'Never mind. I may see you again before I die!'

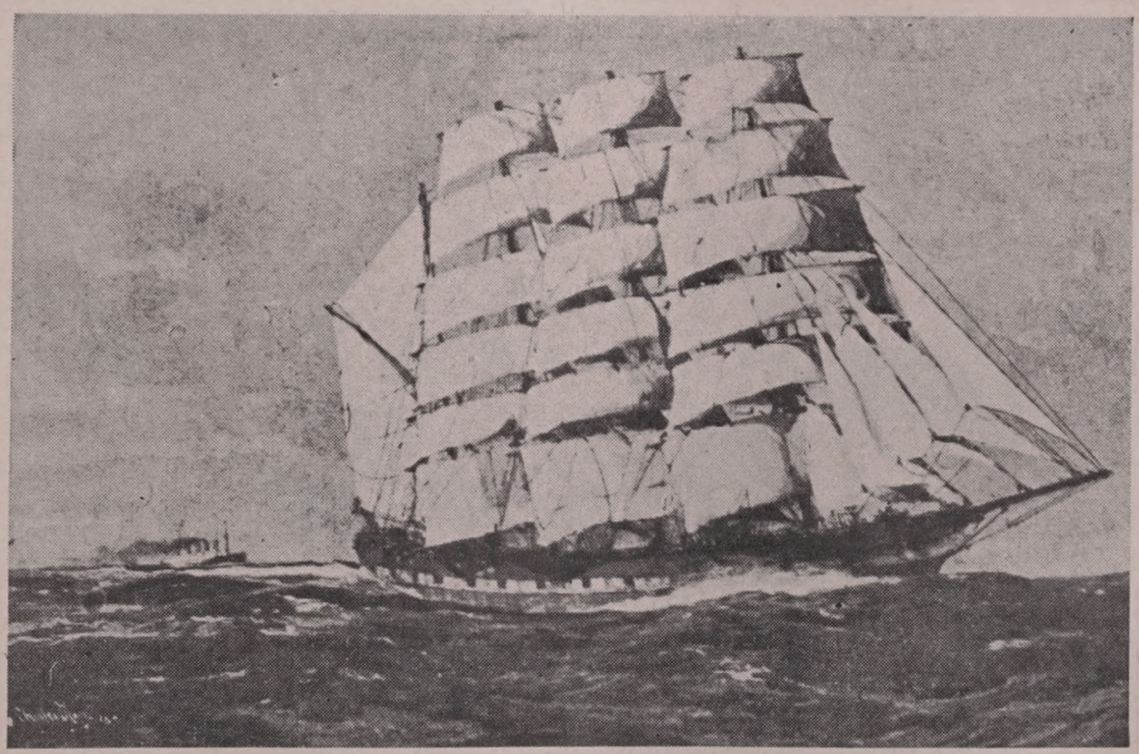
"The small boat was well armed and manned, and both boats set off together for the island where they had agreed to leave us to perish."



Courtesy of Sidgwick and Jackson.

THE MOST FAMOUS OCEAN RACE IN HISTORY.

The *Ariel* and the *Taeping*, after a several months' run from Calcutta to England, passing the Lizard light a cable's length apart.



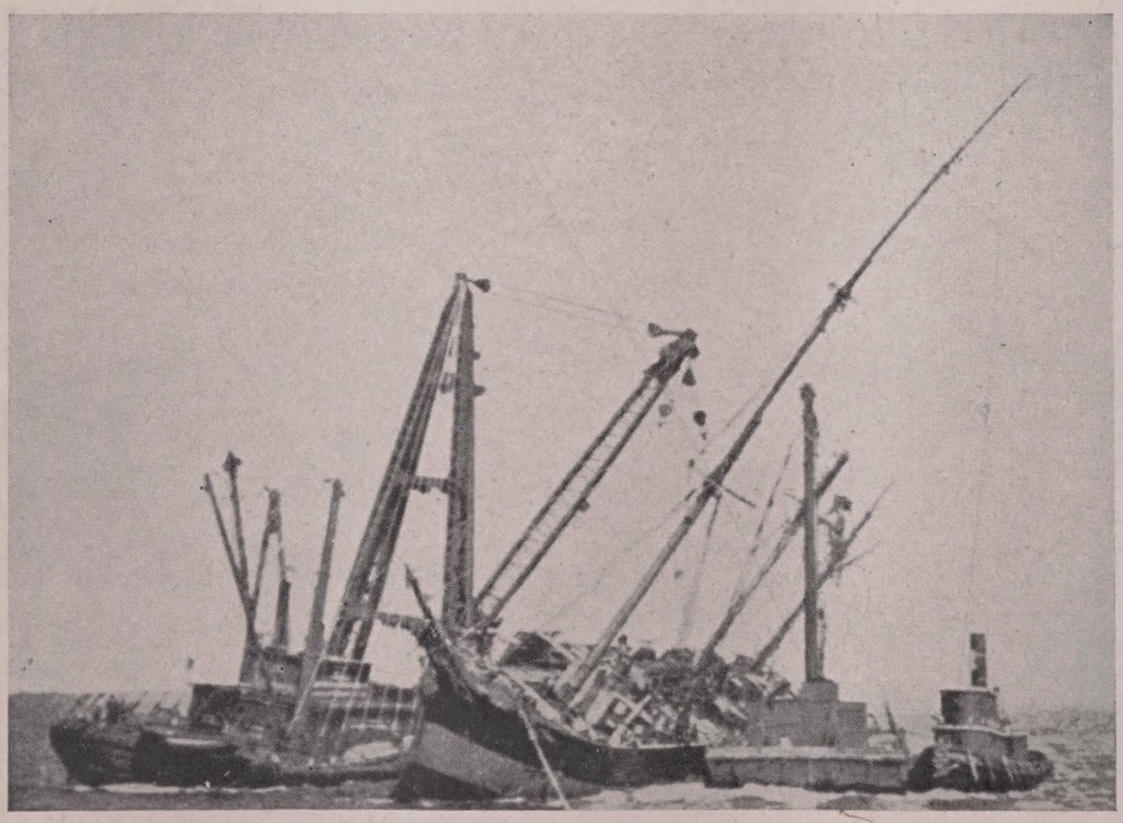
SAILS ARE NOT GONE FROM THE SEA!

A modern American four-masted barque making for Sandy Hook, with the *Mauretania* coming up astern.

Courtesy of Technical World Magazine.

RESCUED BY A FLEET OF SCHOONERS.

The steamer *Firefly* entering St. John's Harbor in the arms of a score of fishing craft.



Courtesy of Engineering Magazine.

QUICK WORK IN A BUSY CHANNEL.

A wreck in the pathway of navigation must be raised or destroyed at once. The barque *La Escosesa* snatched out from the entrance of New York Harbor.

CHAPTER IV

MAROONED ON THE KEY

"THE scene, to us," Latimer read on, "was a funeral scene. There were no arms in the prisoners' boat, and, of course, all attempt to release ourselves would have been throwing our lives away, as Bolidar was near us, well armed.

"We were rowed about two miles northeasterly from the pirate ship to a small low island, lonely and desolate. We arrived at sunset.

"For the support of us eleven prisoners, they left only a ten-gallon keg of water, and perhaps a few quarts in another vessel, which was brackish, part of a barrel of flour, a small keg of lard, one ham and some salt fish, a small kettle and an old broken pot, and one small blanket which was thrown out as the boat pulled away. One of the prisoners happened to have a little coffee in his pocket. These provisions comprehended all our means of sustaining life, and for what length of time we knew not. We felt anxiety,

especially, over the need of water, and our supply was comparatively nothing for eleven men. A man may live twice as long without food as without water.

"Look at us now, my friends, benighted on a little spot of sand in the midst of the ocean, far from the usual track of vessels, and with every appearance of a violent thunder tempest and a boisterous night! I assure you, we were very wretched.

"When the boats were moving from the shore, on recovering myself a little, I asked Bolidar:

"'Are you going to leave us so?'

"He answered:

"'No, only for two days, we go for water and wood, then come back, take you.'

"I requested him to give us bread and other stores, for they had plenty in the boat, and at least a hundred barrels of flour on the *Mexican,* but he refused and they hurried off to the vessel. That was the last time I saw him.

"We then turned our attention upon finding the spot most convenient for our comfort, and soon discovered a little roof supported by stakes driven into the sand, probably erected by the

turtle fishers, who visit these islands in June. It was thatched with the leaves of the cocoanut tree, a considerable part of which was blown off. After spreading the old sail over the roof, we proceeded to put our small stock of provisions under it.

"Soon after, a heavy shower of rain came on, which penetrated the canvas and made it nearly as uncomfortable inside as it was outside. We were not prepared to catch water, having nothing to put it in.

"Our next object was to get fire, and, after gathering some of the driest fuel to be found, with flint and steel we kindled a fire, which was never afterwards allowed to be extinguished. The night was very dark, but we found a piece of old tarred rope, which served us as a candle.

"On examining the ground under the roof, we found perhaps thousands of creeping insects, scorpions, lizards, crickets, and young snakes. After scraping them away as well as we could, we lay down, the most of us having nothing but the damp earth for our bed, but it being so wet, several of us were sick for some days.

"Sunday, 20th. As soon as daylight came on, we proceeded to take a view of our little island.

We found it to measure about one acre, of coarse white sand. It was mostly two feet, and, in some places, three feet above the surface of the ocean. On the highest part were growing some small bushes and some mangroves, the dry part of which was our fuel. There was also the wild castor oil bean, and many prickly pear cactus bushes.

"We were greatly disappointed in not finding the former, suitable food. As for the latter, it gave us only a few pears about the size of a small button pear. The outside has almost invisible thorns, which, if they touch the fingers or the lips, remain there, causing a severe smart; the inside is a spongy substance, full of juice and seeds which are red and a little tartish. Had they been in abundance, we should not have suffered so much for water, but, alas! even this substitute was not for us, for there were less than a peck of the prickly pears, all told.

"On the northerly side of the island was a hollow, where the tide penetrated the sand, leaving stagnant water.

"According to the best calculation I could make, we were about thirty-five miles from any port of Cuba, one hundred from Trinidad, and

forty from the usual track of American vessels or others which might pass that way. No vessel of any size can pass among these Keys. After taking this view of our condition, which was very gloomy, we began to suspect that we were left on this desolate island, by these merciless plunderers, to perish.

"Of this we were fully convinced, yet we could not help but look anxiously for the pirates' boat to come, according to promises, with more water and provisions, but we looked in vain. We soon saw them get under way, with all sail set, and run directly away from us until out of sight, and we never saw them again.

"Before they were entirely out of sight, we raised the white blanket on a pole, waving it in the air in hopes that, at two miles' distance, they would see it and be moved to pity. But pity in such monsters was not to be found. It was not to their interest to save us from the lingering death which we now saw before us.

"Our next care now was to try for water. We dug several holes in the sand, but what water trickled in was too salt for use. The tide probably penetrates through the island. We now came on short allowance of water. Having no

means of securing what we had under lock and key, some one in the night would slyly drink, and it was soon all gone.

"We baked some bread, by mixing flour in salt water and frying it in lard, allowing ourselves eight quite small pancakes to begin with. The ham was reserved for some important occasion, and the salt fish was no use to us, because of lack of fresh water.

"Monday, 21st. In the morning we walked around the beach in expectation of finding something useful. On our way, picked up a paddle about three feet long, similar to the Indian canoe paddle, except the top which was like that of a shovel. . . . We likewise found some conchs and roasted them. They were a pretty good shell-fish, though rather tough.[1]

[1] The author, when a boy of fourteen years, was wrecked on Nine Keys, off the coast of British Honduras, and was one of four survivors of a crew of eight. We lived for thirteen days on these same conchs (large shell-fish several inches across, the shells of which are used for decoration). We were not so fortunate as to have the means of making a fire, and were compelled to eat them raw and wriggling. We had no water, but there were a few cocoanut trees on the Key, the nuts being in a green state, and the liquid of the unripe nuts was the only drink we had during those thirteen days. We were rescued by the timely arrival of a small schooner which was carrying the monthly provisions to a lighthouse on a Key near by.—F. R.-W.

"We discovered, at low water, a bar or spit of sand, extending northeasterly from us, about three miles distant, to a cluster of Keys, which were covered with mangrove trees. Mr. Brackett, the mate, and George, one of the crew, attempted to wade across, the water at that time of the tide being only up to their armpits, but they were pursued by a shark and returned without success. The tide, here, rises about four feet.

"Tuesday, 22nd. We found several pieces of the palmetto or cabbage tree, and some pieces of board, and put them together in the form of a raft. With this we endeavored to cross to the other Keys, but it proved ineffectual. . . . We were a little cheered when, in scraping the sand away under the awning, so as to clear it away from the thousands of crickets and bugs which infested it, we found a hatchet—probably left by the turtle-hunters—which was, to us, particularly serviceable.

"Wednesday, 23rd. Early this morning, one of our Spanish fellow-prisoners crossed over the bar, having taken with him a pole sharpened at one end 'to kill sharks,' but he saw none to trouble him. While he was gone, we tried the water

in several places and found it very salt, but, not having any other, we drank it and found that it had a very distressing effect upon us. We now concluded to reduce our allowance of pancakes, being sensible that our little stock of provisions could last but a few days longer. We had not the faintest hope, however, that they would endure long enough to save our lives.

"Towards night the Spaniard returned, almost famished for want of water and food. He reported that he had found some sugar-box shooks (quarter-inch boards) but he had found no water. He said he had great difficulty in making his way through the mangrove trees, the ground being very swampy, so that we should not better ourselves by going there, although the Key was larger than ours.

"Thursday, 24th. This morning, after taking a little coffee made of the water which we thought seemed the least salt, and two or three of the little cakes, we felt somewhat refreshed, and concluded to make another visit to those Keys in hopes of finding something more which might make a raft for us to escape to some other Key where there might be water, and thus to avoid perishing by thirst.

"Accordingly, seven of us set off, waded across the bar and searched all the Keys thereabouts. On one we found a number of sugar-box shooks, on another two lashing planks and some pieces of old spars, which were part of the deck-load of the *Exertion* that was thrown off when she grounded on the bar.

"The wind at this time was blowing so strong on shore as to prevent us rafting our stuff round to our island, we were obliged to haul it on the beach for the present. Then we dug for water in the highest place, but found it as salt as ever, and returned to our island. Hunger and thirst began to prey on us terribly.

"Friday, 25th. Again passed over those Keys to windward, in order to raft our stuff to the island, it being most convenient for building. But the surf on the beach was so rough that we were again compelled to postpone the work. Returning, we found, on our way, an old top timber of a vessel with some spikes in it.

"In the hollow of an old stump we found two large lizards, one male, the other female. Only one was caught. After taking off the skin, we judged it to weigh a pound and a half. With some flour and lard—the only things we had ex-

cept salt water—it made us a fine mess. We thought it a rare dish, though a small one for eleven half-starved persons.

"At the same time, a small vessel hove in sight. We made a signal to her with the blanket tied to a pole. Should they be pirates they could do no more than kill us, and perhaps would give us the water for which we began to suffer most excessively. Notwithstanding all our efforts, she took no notice of us.

"Saturday, 26th. Moderate weather and smooth sea. At low tide we found some cockles. We boiled and ate them, but they were very painful to the stomach. David Warren, one of the crew, had a fit of strangling, but recovered.

"Most of us then set off to the windward Keys, where the planks and shooks were put together to form a raft, which, with pieces of board, we paddled over to our island. There we consulted whether to build a raft large enough to hold us all, or a boat for some to seek rescue. Finding that the shooks had three or four nails in each, and having found a piece of large reed, like bamboo, of which to make pins, we concluded to build a boat.

"Sunday, 27th. Commenced our labor. . . . We took the two planks, which were about fourteen feet long and two and a half wide, and fixed them together for the bottom of the boat. Then we cut knees from the mangrove trees or bushes, which spread so much as to make the boat four feet wide at the top, spacing them exactly the distance apart of a Havana sugar-box. Her stern was square and the bow tapered to a peak.

"Monday, 28th. Went on with the work as fast as possible. Some of the Spaniards had long knives, which proved very useful in fitting timbers, and a gimlet, which I had slipped into my pocket when on board the pirate, enabled us to use the wooden pins.

"Now our spirits began to revive, but water, water was continually on our minds. We now feared lest the pirates should come, find out our plan and put us to death, although, before that time, we had wished to see them, being so much in want of water. The labor was extremely burdensome. We cooked some cakes, but found it necessary to reduce the quantity again, however small before. Searching in vain on the windward Keys for more wood we found some herbs

which the Spaniards called Spanish tea. This when boiled, was found palatable, though the water was very salt.

"In the evening, when we were sitting around the fire to keep off mosquitoes, I observed David Warren's eyes to shine like glass. The mate said to him:

"'David, I think you will die before morning. You are struck with death, now.'

"I thought so, too. . . . In the course of the night he had another spell of strangling, and soon after expired without much pain and without a groan.

"Tuesday, 29th. Part of us recommenced labor on the boat, while myself and Mr. Brackett selected a clear spot of sand on the northern side of the island, where we dug Warren's grave. . . . Whose turn would come next, we knew not. At about ten o'clock we conveyed the corpse to the grave followed by us survivors —a scene whose awful solemnity can never be painted. . . . The middle part of the day being very warm, our mouths parched with thirst and our spirits depressed, we made but little progress during the remainder of the day. In the evening we were employed in picking

oakum out of the bolt rope taken from the old sail.

"Wednesday, 30th. Returned to labor on the boat with as much vigor as our weak and debilitated state would allow. . . . However, before night, we began to caulk her seams, by means of pieces of hard mangrove.

"Thursday, 31st. Went on with the work, some at caulking, some with battening the seams with strips of canvas and pieces of shook nailed over, to keep the oakum in. Having found a suitable pole for a mast, the rest went about making a sail from the one we had used for a covering. Also we fitted oars of a sort by tying short pieces of board on mangrove branches, having a piece of fishing line brought in his pocket by one of the prisoners.

"At 3 P. M. the boat was completed and put afloat. We had, all this time, confidently hoped that she would be sufficiently large and strong to carry us all. We made a trial and were cruelly disappointed!

"This was, indeed, a severe trial, and the emotions it called up were not easy to be expressed. She proved leaky, for we had no carpenter's yard, nor smith's shop to go to.

"And now the question arose—Who should go, and how many?

"I found the boat could not carry more than six, four to row, one to steer and one to bail.

"Three of the Spaniards and the Frenchman claimed the right, as being best acquainted with the nearest inhabitants. Likewise they had, when taken, two boats left at St. Maria, about forty miles distant, which they were confident of finding. Mr. Brackett, it was agreed, should go in my stead, because my papers must accompany me as a necessary protection, and my men apprehended danger, if they were lost. They wished that Joseph Baxter should go, because he could speak both Spanish and English. This left Manuel, George, Thomas and myself to await their return. They promised to come back in two or three days for the rest of us.

"Having thus made all arrangements, and putting on board a keg of the least salt water, with a few pancakes and salt fish, they set off a little before sunset with our prayers for their safety and return to our relief. To launch off into the wide ocean, with strength almost exhausted, and in such a frail boat as this, you will

say was very hazardous, and so, in truth, it was, but what was there left to us?

"Their intention was to touch at the Key where the *Exertion* was, and, if no boat was to be found there, to proceed on to St. Maria, and if they found none there, to go on to Trinidad and send us relief. But, alas, that was the last time I ever saw them.

"Friday, February 1st. This day we rose early, and traversed the beach in search of cockles, but found very few. We returned to our tent and I made some skillygolee, or flour and salt water boiled together, which we found better than the clear salty water. We passed the day very uncomfortably and my people were dissatisfied at not having an equal chance—as they called it—with the others in the boat.

"Saturday, 2nd. Thomas and George made another visit to the windward Keys, where they found some more shooks and two pieces of spars and towed them around as before. We now had some hopes of finding enough to make us a raft, which would carry us to some place of relief, in case the boat should not return.

"Sunday, 3rd. A calm, warm day, but a very gloomy one to us. It now became difficult

to support life. Our provisions were nearly expended, there was no appearance of rain since the night we first landed. Our thirst was increasing, our strength wasting, our few clothes hanging in rags, our beards of great length and almost turned white, nothing like relief before us and no boat in sight. We had marked out, each one of us, the place for his grave.

"Monday, 4th. Having seriously reflected on our situation, we concluded to put what shooks and spars we had, together, to form a raft and ascertain what weight it would carry. Here again we were disappointed, for we had not wood enough to bear scarcely two of us.

"Tuesday, 5th. About 10 o'clock, A. M., I discovered a boat drifting by on the southeast side of the island, about a mile distant. I deemed it a providential thing, and urged Thomas and George trying to get her by using the raft, which would, however, barely abide their weight. They reluctantly consented and set off, but it was nearly 3 P. M. before they came up with her.

"It was the same boat we had built!

"Where, then, was my friend Brackett and those who went with him?

"The men who went for the boat found it full of water, without oars, sail or bailer. Being in this condition and about three miles to the leeward, the men found it impossible to tow her up, and were till eleven o'clock at night getting back with the raft. They were so exhausted that had it not been utterly calm, they could never have returned.

"Wednesday, 6th. This morning was the most gloomy I had ever experienced. There appeared hardly a ray of hope that Brackett could return, seeing that the boat was lost. Our provisions nearly gone, our mouths parched extremely with thirst, our strength wasted, our spirits broken, and our hopes imprisoned within the circumference of this desolate island in the midst of an unfrequented ocean, all these things gave to the scene around us the hue of death.

"In the midst of this dreadful despondence, a sail hove in sight. Our hopes were raised, of course, but no sooner raised than darkened, by hearing a gun fired. Here, then, was another gang of pirates!

"She soon, however, came near enough to anchor, and her boat pushed off towards us with

three men in her. Thinking it no worse to die by the sword than by famine, I walked down immediately to meet them. I knew them not.

"A moment before the boat touched the ground, a man leaped from her bows and caught me in his arms.

"It was Nickols!

"No words can express my emotions at this moment. This was a friend indeed! The reason of my not recognizing them before, they had all cut off their beards and their whiskers.

"Turning to my fellow-sufferers, Nickols asked:

"'Are these all that are left of you? Where are the others?' Then, seeing David's grave, 'Are they dead, then? I suspected it. I knew what you were put here for!'

"As soon as I could recover myself, I gave him an account of Mr. Brackett and the others. . . . I took the last piece of paper that I had and wrote with a pencil a few lines informing the mate of our rescue. . . . I put the paper in a bottle, previously found on the beach, put in a stopper and left it, together with what little flour remained, a keg of water from

Nickols' boat and a few other things which might be of service to Brackett, if he returned.

"Nickols then related the manner of his desertion from the pirates, which had been made possible by the pirate capture of four small vessels, on board one of which Nickols had been sent as prize master. One dark night, he altered his course and slipped away.

"From Nickols I heard that Jonnia had been made captain of the pirates, at the beginning, because he was the only one who had been a pirate before, and that he, Bolidar and one other of the pirates held together because the captain had revealed to them the hiding-place of an old hulk in which the pirate band with which he had before been associated had hidden their treasure. Nickols knew, in a general manner, the location, but had never visited the place.

"We then decided, since there was plenty of water and provision aboard, to go in search of this hulk, though I was anxious to get to Trinidad and show my papers. We went first to the *Exertion,* in the hope of finding some clue to the fate of my friend, Mr. Brackett, but nothing appeared. Four days later, we fell in with a privateer brig.

"Nickols declared that he could recognize some of the pirates on board her, and we fired upon them. But they were more heavily gunned than we and sent a boat aboard. The vessel proved to be a vessel with a Mexican commission. Happily, I still had my papers and could show who I was, and why we had fired. We could not explain our course, however, not wishing to reveal that we were on a treasure search and were compelled to return to Trinidad.

"Before leaving me, however, Nickols told me that the hulk was moored in a deep bay of Ghost Island, quite hidden by mangrove bushes, about sixty miles north of the island on which we had been marooned and lying due west of the Handcuffs Rocks. He intended to go in search of the treasure hulk, but, receiving an offer at Trinidad to go as second mate of a deep-water ship, he accepted. I never heard of him again.

"For many months I remained without any certain information respecting the fate of Mr. Brackett and his companions. But, in the course of the following autumn, Mr. Brackett very unexpectedly paid me a visit in my home in Massachusetts. . . . He gave me an ac-

count of his adventures and of the reasons why he did not return to us.

"He told me that, when they had left us, and put to sea in the miserable boat which we had constructed, they went to the *Exertion* and fortunately found a better boat, of which they took possession, and suffered the old one to float away, and it accordingly passed our solitary island in its random course, causing us a great deal of alarm.

"From the wreck, they steered among the Keys to the mainland of Cuba, and reached the town of Principe, where my cargo was sold. Then Mr. Brackett related his tale of suffering and requested assistance to rescue the remaining prisoners—ourselves—on the Key. The authorities furnished him with several soldiers, with whom he again put to sea, with the intention of returning to our rescue. They had gone but a short distance, however, when the soldiers positively refused to go any further, bad weather threatening, and forced him to return with them to Principe. Thus all his hopes of being able to rescue us were extinguished.

"A stranger, and helpless as he was, it was out of his power to do anything more, and he

could only hope that we might have been saved in some other way. Friendless, without money, and debilitated by recent suffering, he hardly knew which way to turn. He was desirous of reaching home, and finally decided to travel on foot to the north side of Cuba. After a long and tedious journey, during which he suffered dreadfully, he at length reached Havana, from which port he took passage to Boston. . . .

"Since, I have met with Mr. Stewart, who was commercial agent in Trinidad at the time of my capture. He informed me that the piratical schooner *Mexican* was afterwards chased by an English government vessel, from Jamaica, which was cruising in search of it. Being hotly pursued, the pirates left their vessel and fled to the mangrove bushes, on an island similar to that on which they had left me and my crew to die. The English surrounded them, and thus they were cut off from all hope of escape.

"They remained there fourteen days, when, being almost entirely subdued by famine, eleven surrendered themselves, and were taken, among them Bolidar, who declared that it would have been easy for him to buy his freedom if it were not that their treasure hulk had sunk in four

fathoms of water. The others, the captain among them, refused to surrender themselves and lived by cannibalism. The English vessel remained there thirty days further, long enough, surely, for the pirates—who were without food or water—to die from famine and thirst.

"The few who were taken were carried by the government vessel into Trinidad. Mr. Stewart said that he saw them himself, and such miserable objects that still possessed life he had never beheld. They were in a state of starvation, their beards had grown to a fearful length, their bodies were covered with filth and vermin. From Trinidad they were taken to Kingston, Jamaica, and there hanged."

Latimer stopped, refolded the papers, and looked up.

"That's all of it," he said.

"It's enough," declared the "Admiral." "I'm glad to have heard it. I've read pirate stories a-plenty, but that is the first log I've ever heard written by a sailorman which tells just what happened in shipshape fashion."

"An' for the treasure hulk, sir?" queried the sailor.

"Well," answered the "Admiral" cautiously.

"I don't much like it. 'Ghost Island' has a bad name. There's queer doin's been seen there!"

"Oh, that's all talk, Grap!" interjected Latimer, who was proud of being up-to-date and scorning the superstitions of the sea. "If the hulk is in only four fathoms of water, we ought to be able to get her, easy. That's nothing in a diving dress!"

"I've no objections to goin' along," said the old wrecker, "if Son Jerry wants to take the *Moray* there. I used to know the reefs down that way, once. An', I s'pose, if we see any ghosts down there, Lat'll fight 'em off!"

CHAPTER V

GHOST ISLAND

SOME little time was spent in arranging the affairs of the *Ocean Fay*. The skipper of the wrecked vessel, despite his threats, made no official protest concerning the "Admiral's" summary proceedings, for he was well aware that he had been at fault in refusing assistance for a vessel "in distress." Moreover, he was wise enough to see that Bahaman opinion would accord rather with a countryman than with a stranger. On his part, "Admiral" Voley took the honest stand of charging only the ten thousand dollars which had been offered at the beginning, although the skipper's delay had made the task both more dangerous and more difficult.

During this time, Mark Hoveller, the sailor who had brought the tale of the pirates and the treasure hulk, stayed in a small hut on North Biminis, awaiting the time when both the "Admiral" and the *Moray* should be free. Latimer went to see him quite often, and at last learned

the reason why the sailor had never been able to get a crew together to search for the treasure. Mark, himself, was so excessively afraid of sea phantoms that he feared to go himself, and, at the same time, was so suspicious that he would not let a search party go without him.

"Where did the island get its bad name, Mark?" queried Latimer, one day.

"Ain't ye never heard the story o' Ghost Island? Why, lad, that's one o' the worst spots on the seas!" was the terror-stricken answer. "Years ago, long afore Columbus first discovered the West Indies, Ghost Island used to be 'way over t'other side o' the Atlantic. The Hand o' Satan Island, it was called then."

"But how could it get over here, Mark?" the boy asked, amused at the sailor's credulity, but impressed by his obvious earnestness.

"Ain't yo' never heard o' wanderin' islands? There's a lot o' them driftin' about in the sea! Many a good ship has gone down to Davy Jones' Locker, because o' them. Some o' them are made of a magnet stone, an' when a ship comes near 'em, every nail or anything that's made of iron or steel flies to the rock an' the vessel falls to pieces.

"Some o' them spout flame, like volcanoes, bringin' up fire out o' the middle o' the sea. There's others are like big islands o' seaweed, but so solid that trees grow on 'em, an' when a ship gets near 'em, she's stuck an' can't never get away.

"Then there's the rock where Judas Iscariot goes to cool himself on Sundays. That comes up one minute after midnight on Sunday mornin's, sometimes here an' sometimes there, an' sinks again, one minute afore midnight.

"Some o' them islands look like icebergs, from far off, but inside there are fields an' houses an' all sorts o' things. There's a few been seen in the sky, upside down, like a mirage.

"Ay, lad, there's a many o' these wanderin' islands, but they're hard for a sailin' ship to come up to 'em, for they always drift straight to wind'ard. Folks on steamers never see 'em, for they're not sailormen at all. But the places are there, an', if yo' look on old charts, yo'll see marked down a lot o' islands that folks never see to-day. How'll yo' explain that?"

"Mistakes of the early navigators, I suppose," hazarded the boy.

"No, lad, not mistakes," declared Mark,

shaking his head solemnly. "I could spin yo' some queer yarns about them islands. But yo' was askin' about Ghost Island, partickler. It was this-a-way:

"Before the Atlantic was first crossed by Columbus it was guarded by two islands, one good, an' one bad. Good spirits lived on one, demons on t'other. The good one was St. Brendan's Isle. Yo' can see it on the old charts, an' there's more than one man livin' to-day that's seen it. Irish folk an' Brittany folk see it oftenest. That's why the folk in Brittany throw flowers to Mother Carey's Chickens on All Souls' Day. They know the birds'll fly straight to St. Brendan's Isle an' carry their remembrances to the drowned sailors what live there.

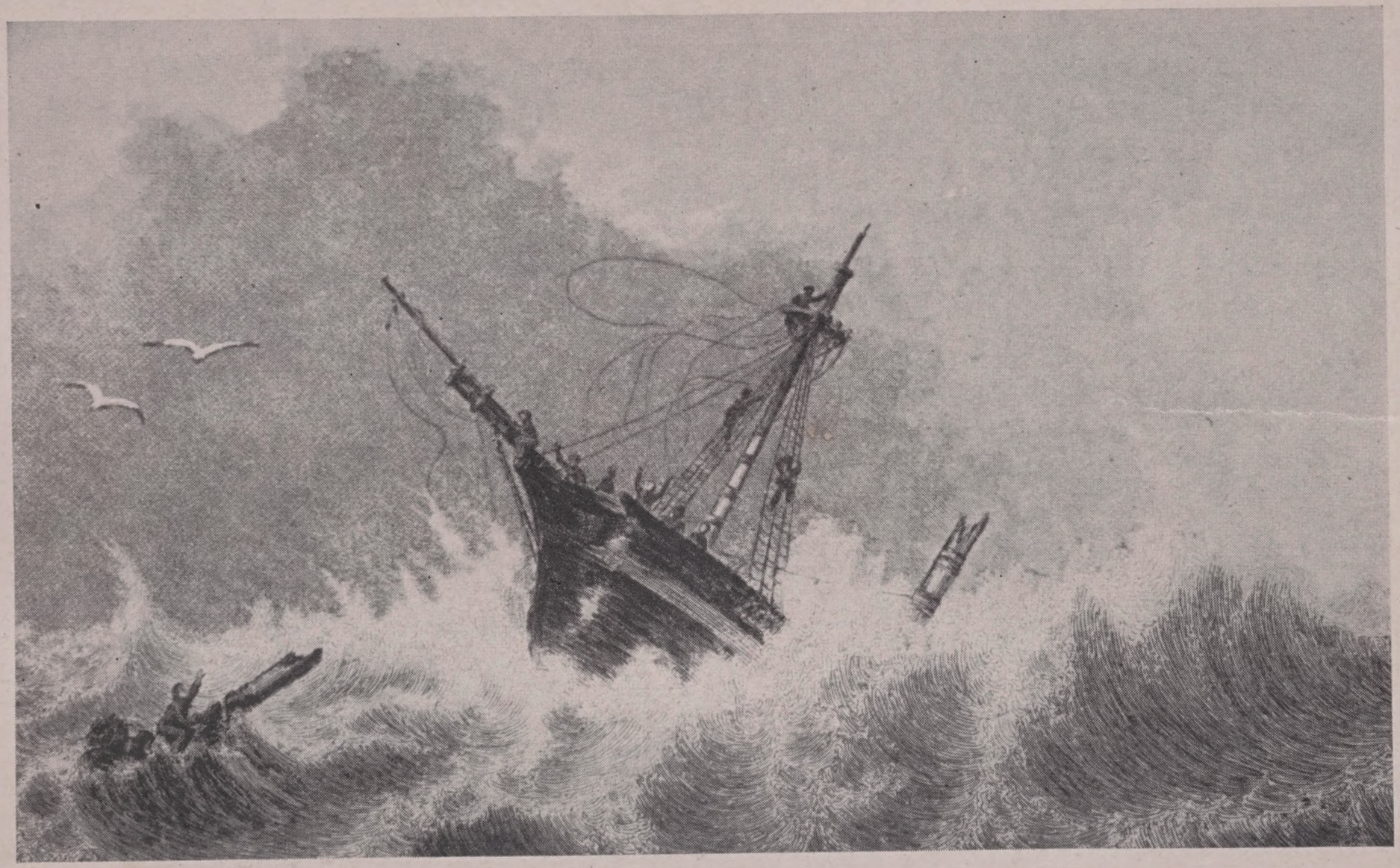
"The bad island was known as the Hand o' Satan. Yo'll find that on the old charts, too, due west o' the Straits o' Gibraltar. Sometimes it was an island, with high, black sharp rocks an' an on-shore gale always blowin'. Other times, there was nothing to be seen but breakers, an' a twenty-knot current drivin' a ship on.

"Mostwise, though, it wasn't to be seen as land at all, but when a ship went sailin' over it, the Hand o' Satan, big an' black, the knuckles

Courtesy of Merrill, Higgins and Co.

THE HAND OF THE SEA-FIEND.

Until the days of Columbus, it was believed that the Atlantic Ocean, or the Sea of Darkness, was the realm of a demon who grasped ships and drew them below the waters.



WRECKED IN THE OPEN SEA.

Vessel, dismasted by hurricane, sinks in deep water, beyond reach of human recovery.

swelled an' knotty, the finger-nails pointed an' red-hot, would reach out o' the sea—nigh as high as the topmasts of a full-rigged ship—an' drag a vessel to the bottom.

"Where are them islands now, yo' ask? St. Brendan's Isle, so I've heard tell, is still a-wanderin'. 'Fiddlers' Green' is on it, the place where a decent sailorman goes, when his seafarin' days is done. Fair an' high she lies, with never a storm around it. Mother Carey's Chickens go there, but no other birds o' the sea. The gulls, them souls o' captains who ha' lost their ships an' are doomed to go a-wanderin' till the day o' judgment, never come a-nigh that island. That's why yo' hear 'em scream so high.

"Onst in a great while, a sailin' ship'll see St. Brendan's Isle in the distance. That means there's some one aboard'll never reach port, but whoever dies, that trip, goes straight to 'Fiddlers' Green.' There's a many have tried to sail for it, but no matter what course ye steer there's only one ship built that'll ever drop anchor in her harbors."

"What ship is that?" asked Latimer.

"She has a-many names, that craft. When I was sailin' out o' St. Malo, they used to call her

La Grande Chasse Foudre. Several thousand leagues long she is, an' her masts are so tall that if yo' started as a boy to reach her maintop, yo'd be a gray old man before yo' reached the futtock shrouds.

"There's plenty o' time aboard that craft, lad. When she goes about, it takes her a hundred years to go from full to full. It takes two hundred years to raise her anchor. Her signal halliards are larger than the hull of an ocean steamer, an' her hold has food an' wine enough to last a million men a million million years. There's no dyin' aboard *La Grande Chasse Foudre,* lad, an' what you think is the rainbow is just the sunshine playin' on her pennant. She'll drop anchor in the harbor o' St. Brendan's Isle, but no other ship ever will."

"And the Hand of Satan Island, Mark?" queried Latimer.

"Ay, the Hand o' Satan. That was a big land, too, once. Covered with forests it was, trees with a wood as solid as iron an' as light as cork. With these the Demon built the first pirate ship. Black she was, an' the nails that held her together were red-hot an' stayed red-hot in the coldest seas. Her sails were made o' grave-

cloths, an' her riggin' was twisted from the hair o' vampires. Her hold was full o' burnin' sulphur an' yo' could smell her a hundred sea-miles away. Her crew were sailormen who had been killed or drowned while mutineers. All had dogs' jaws an' they tore each other to pieces day an' night.

"Then the Demon got so proud o' his ship that, one dark night, he set himself to board *La Grande Chasse Foudre.* The officer o' the watch, that night, was St. Elmo, an' when he bid the Demon keep away, the skipper o' the Black Ship laughed.

"At the sound o' that laugh, St. Elmo raised his finger, an' great shafts o' white light came flashin' down from the sky. Flame without heat, that was, my lad, an' when it struck the Black Ship, she blew up into a million million pieces. Even the water o' the ocean can't put 'em out, an' now, any dark night, yo' can lean over a ship's bow, an' see the pieces o' the Black Ship sparkle in the water."

"Phosphorescence!" interrupted Latimer. "That's made by the light given out by myriads of little sea-creatures, so small that you can hardly see them."

"Maybe," answered Mark, wholly unconvinced. "I've heard folks talk that way afore. But where else, except from a Demon, would yo' get fire that water couldn't put out? What's more, ships that have been driven on the rocks a-purpose, have blue flames around 'em, an' others don't."

"That's phosphorescence, due to rotting wood," the boy explained.

"Maybe," repeated the sailor. "But yo'll not deny that corpse candles are lighted on the masts an' yards of a ship by St. Elmo to show that there's ill around a ship but that she'll get safe to port, or, if she sinks, that every one on board'll go to Fiddlers' Green."

"That's all superstition!" retorted Latimer, impatiently. "St. Elmo's fire, or corposants, are nothing but a slow discharge of electricity from the air to the sea. They're really a sort of lightning."

"They don't burn," protested Mark. "I've seen a man, on the yard-arm, hold his hand above his head, an' there was a corpse candle blazin' from the tips of each of his fingers, an' he declared, when he came down from aloft, that he didn't even feel his hand warm."

"That's possible enough," the boy admitted. "St. Elmo's fires don't burn."

"An' lightnin' does!" retorted Mark, triumphantly, feeling he had got the best of the argument. "Where will yo' get a fire that doesn't burn, savin' from St. Elmo?"

"But the island, Mark?" interjected Latimer, not knowing quite what reply to make.

"Ay, the island! Well, when the Demon got back to his island, after his Black Ship had been all blown to bits, he found it adrift. For a long time, by usin' spells, he was able to keep it abreast o' the Straits o' Gibraltar, an' so kept any ships from sailin' to the west'ard. But when Columbus came across, with every man aboard a Christian, an' with the Cross painted on the sails of his little ships, the Demon had to run. He was pushed west'ard an' west'ard until he got here in the West Indies. He tried to force the island against the blessed trade winds, but the island broke to bits an' the pieces drifted all over the Seven Seas. Ghost Island is one o' those bits, an' Ghost Key, off the coast o' Florida, is another. The Bermudas were called the Devil's Islands once. Then there's a lot o' places in these waters that he has a right to, be-

cause pirates an' slavers have done a lot o' murders an' there's never been a good deed done on 'em."

"In that case," suggested Latimer, "the Demon must be getting fewer chances all the time, for there are no pirates in these seas today."

"I wouldn't be too sure, lad!" warned the sailor. "In 1902, when I was aboard a barque, bound for San Domingo, we saw a swift-sailing brig overhaul a topsail schooner. Even with the naked eye, we could see puffs o' smoke, an' the skipper, with his glass, said he could see bodies bein' heaved overboard. The fight didn't last long. Presently the topsail schooner was hauled off on the starboard tack and set off after the brig."

"Why didn't you go to the rescue?" put in Latimer, with boyish indignation.

"An' get took ourselves? We weren't carryin' no arms to fight a pirate! Oh, yes, lad, the Jolly Roger is still a-flyin'. There's contracts with the Demon goin' on these days, too!

"In 1909, the negro skipper of a brigantine, hailin' from Jacmel, Haiti, was burned alive on board his ship by his negro crew, because he ad-

mitted to havin' made a contract with the Black One to run the ship on Ghost Island. The mate took the brigantine back to Jacmel, an' gave hisself up to the authorities to stand trial.

"There was an investigation, an' it was found out that two ships o' which this skipper had been master, had been lost mysteriously. The court set every man o' the crew free, an' thanked 'em for havin' freed the seas o' such a captain. The owners gave the mate command of the ship."

"Look here, Mark!" questioned Latimer. "If you're so superstitious about these things, how did you have the nerve to run the *Ocean Fay* on a reef?"

"The skipper's a Finn," answered the sailor, lowering his voice. "It ain't no sin to wreck a ship what has a Finn in command. They're wind-wizards, every one of 'em."

"So!" exclaimed Latimer. He had heard from his grandfather of this old superstition of the sea, and to what lengths it had reached. Not many years ago, an English sailor was hanged for killing a shipmate. He did not deny his crime, but declared that he ought to be rewarded, rather than punished, for the slain man was a Finn.

The cruise of the *President,* bound out from Charleston, is famous. When off the Bahamas, a terrific storm came up, blowing—in a way no sailorman had ever seen before—clear in the teeth of the trade-winds. The storm was always worse when a certain man was at the wheel. While he was on deck, the watch below broke open his sea-chest, and found some writing in the Finn language. They accused him of raising the storm, and one of the crew started after him with a sheath-knife. The accused man jumped overboard and—according to the ship's log—ran over the sea as if it were dry land. The storm lulled a little, then rose again, worse than before. So the sailors threw the Finn's sea-chest overboard. Again it lulled and again it rose. They hunted the vessel high and low, and at last found an old shoe, which had belonged to the Finn, jammed in behind the pumps. They threw that overboard, and the storm stopped that instant and the sea became calm.

With Mark spreading these wild and fearsome yarns on Biminis, it was not surprising that when the time came for the *Moray* to start out for Ghost Island, nearly every negro member

of the tug's crew demanded a vacation. Secretly, the "Admiral" sympathized with them, but, disciplinarian as he was, he knew that none of these requests could be granted. If one man left, all would leave. He must combat superstition with superstition. He called the crew together.

"Men," said the old wrecker, "ye've heard we're goin' to hunt treasure off Ghost Island. That's right. We are. It's a bad spot. But when it comes to danger, it's not as bad as it's painted. Only, if any one o' ye has murdered a man—I don't mean in a fight, but in cold blood—let him step aft an' I'll give him his pay an' let him go."

No one moved. Not one of the men was willing to confess himself a cowardly murderer.

"Very good," said the "Admiral" after a pause. "Now, men, ye've heard that on Ghost Island there's mostly the spirits o' pirates. It's likely enough. But ye know, as well as I do, that a dead pirate can't come on board a ship where there's no gold aboard. The *Moray* 'll sail without a speck o' gold aboard her, an' the man that brings any aboard'll be marooned. Mind ye that! We'll nail a silver coin on the

port an' the starboard bows o' the *Moray* an' every one o' ye will nail a silver coin on the top o' his sea-chest.

"What's more, we'll take a-plenty o' crabs in the hold. Bein' the Demon's messengers, to tell him where the drowned men lie, he'll never sink a ship wi' crabs aboard. One o' you will ask a friend—a landsman—to steal a black cat an' smuggle it aboard. The first man who sees Ghost Island'll throw the cat overboard. That way he'll be in no danger. An' go to church, all o' you, the Sunday afore we sail.

"Now, is there any one o' ye who refuses to go?"

The negroes shuffled uneasily, but the "Admiral" had taken the wind out of their sails by viewing the superstitious perils in their own light.

"Go forrard," said the old wrecker. "Have a fo'c's'le council an' come aft in five minutes."

In less than the appointed time the men were back.

"We'll go, sah," answered the coxswain, acting as spokesman, "if yo' come along, sah!"

"Very good," the "Admiral" answered. "I'll go with ye. We sail Monday mornin'.

Don't forget! Every man o' ye at church the day before!"

"Yes, sah!" answered the coxswain, and there was no doubt as to the sincerity of the answer.

Latimer, who had heard this whole dialogue, chafed inwardly at what he considered his grandfather's weakness, but he did not dare to protest. He was anxious to go, himself, and he knew very well that if he made any objection to the plans he would promptly be ordered to stay at home.

The appointed day came at last. Evidently, some one of the negroes had blabbed the purpose of the voyage, for there was quite a crowd to see the *Moray* start. The men of the crew were ill-at-ease, but every one was there. The first object which caught Latimer's sight, as he boarded the tug, was a huge black tom-cat, lean and scrawny, with a stout collar around his neck, and fastened to the fore-hatch by a chain.

The day was warm and the sea calm. The *Moray* steamed away, amid the silence of the folks on shore and the equal muteness of those on deck. Even Latimer was conscious of a feeling of constraint not far removed from anxiety,

though he tried to shake it off as unworthy of such a very up-to-date person as he believed himself to be.

The afternoon and the first watch of the night passed without incident, but, just as eight bells was sounding for midnight, the propeller stopped with a jar that shook the engines.

The engineer, who was just about to turn in, leaped forward and shut off the steam.

In an instant every person aboard was on deck.

The engineer, a Scotchman, when questioned as to the damage, answered, quietly enough:

"Nae damage yet. 'Tis weed around the propeller, I'm dootin'."

Captain Voley was just about to order the boat out to clear the propeller, when the old wrecker laid a hand on his arm.

"Go slow, Son Jerry, go slow!" he warned.

Then, calling the coxswain, his great voice rose in the silence:

"Heave the lead, there."

A pause, then came the answering cry:

"By the mark, Seven!"

"Better drop one o' the anchors, Son Jerry, an' stand anchor watch," suggested the old man.

"It'll be light by five, an' it's better to wait five hours than to have the men refuse to get in the boat by dark."

The captain of the *Moray* would have protested, but the "Admiral's" suggestion, while, in this instance, gently worded, was equivalent to an order.

He gave the necessary instructions, and the alertness with which the men went about the work of anchoring showed how thoroughly they approved of the order.

Shortly after two bells in the morning watch, or five o'clock in the morning, as soon as it was daylight, the boat was put out and, as the engineer had expected, the propeller was found fouled with gulf-weed. The men pulled it away with a boat-hook and their sheath-knives, but not one of them would touch the weed, and the engineer, superintending the job, was canny enough not to protest.

Ten minutes later, the propeller free, the *Moray* started southward again.

As the day wore on, a brooding heat hung over the sea. The limpid blue color, so deep an azure in West Indian waters, began to appear greasy and pale. A scum formed on the sur-

face. Instead of the healthy salty smell of the ocean, a stench of stagnation and decay arose from the surface of the deep. It was a phenomenon not uncommon in long-standing calms in tropical waters, the same of which Coleridge wrote: "The very deep did rot. . . . That ever this should be, Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs, upon the slimy sea."

Mark, who was evidently well versed in the gruesome lore of the sea, was standing in the bows, telling some of his stories to the deck-hands. The old "Admiral," whose eye was everywhere, noted it, and guessed from the attitudes of the blacks, that the sailor was again sowing the seeds of panic. He frowned, and, beckoning Latimer to accompany him, went forward.

"What was the yarn, Hoveller?" he asked.

The sailor looked confused, but the coxswain, who knew that he was a trusted member of the crew, spoke up promptly.

"Nothin' wrong, Admiral, no sah! We was jes' a-hearin' how, in a stinkin' sea like this, dem hyar big cuttlefishes comes up f'm the bottom an' swallers down a ship."

"Did ye ever see a cuttlefish big enough

to swallow a ship, Mark?" the old wrecker asked.

"Not a whole one, no, sir," the sailor answered promptly. "But I saw a sperm whale come up to the top once, sir, an' the arms o' one o' those devil-fish were wrapped clear around him. The arms were as long as a lower mainmast, an' as thick."

The negro crew gave a gasp of horror.

"How about it, Lat?" queried the "Admiral," turning to his grandson, for he knew the lad was forever reading of the mysteries of the sea.

"It's likely enough, Grap," the boy answered. "Mark's probably talking about the giant squid. No one really does know how big they grow. In one of my books it tells how some fellows on a scientific expedition got a whale in a vital spot with the harpoon gun. She sounded, and when she came up again, half the arms or tentacles of one of these giant squids were around her. They measured them. The longest one was sixty feet long and five feet thick at the bottom."

"Cuttlefish attacking whales, Lat!" exclaimed the old wrecker. "That doesn't sound reasonable, lad."

"It's the whales that attack them," Latimer responded. "They're a cachalot's favorite food. But the squids can put up a good fight. They're awful creatures, really. The big cone-shaped body is so flabby that it spreads all over. The head is sort of shapeless, too, with huge black unwinking and wicked eyes, bigger than a man's head, all the time looking for something to fill the huge and gaping mouth, which has two horny tips like the beak of a monster parrot. All around this mouth, the eight powerful arms or tentacles, with suckers all along their length, writhe around all the time, trying to catch at something. At the same time, the two long feeler tentacles, twice as long as the arms, and with suckers only at the tips, shoot out like darts in every direction, groping after some prey.

"Then, down from the surface, comes rushing the cachalot or sperm whale, looking for his dinner, and knowing that he's not likely to get it without a stiff fight. Being an air-breathing animal, and having come a long way down, the whale hasn't much time to cruise around and hunt for a small squid. He dashes at the first one he sees, whether it be big or small, trying to tear away big chunks of the flabby body of

the squid, or to bite off and devour one of the arms.

"With a swirl the huge under-sea creature throws his other tentacles around the whale, trying to strangle him, and then there's a fight! The whale must snap quick enough to bite off those encircling tentacles and free himself. The squid will clamp one or two of those sucking arms across the whale's mouth, binding them together so's the cachalot can't open his mouth. If he can do that, it's good-bye whale, for if the squid can only hold him down long enough, the whale can't go up for air, and gets drowned. Then the parrot-like beak of the giant cuttle-fish begins to tear at the body of the whale, and the squid has a feast."

"An' has such a fight ever been seen by any one?" queried the "Admiral."

"No, Grap, because it always happens at the bottom of the sea. But there's lots of ways of finding it out. You remember, Grap, that book on Oceanography by the Prince of Monaco you gave me last Christmas? Well, in that book it tells how the Prince, in his special exploring yacht, caught a cachalot whale that had just come up from the bottom after having had a

fight with a squid. The whale was shot, and, when he was dying, he vomited up all he had in his stomach, and it consisted of nothing but squid. But the cachalot's lips were all raw where the suckers of the cuttlefish had been fastened. It hadn't been a very big one, not more than twenty or twenty-five feet long, and the whale had been able to break away."

"What's the biggest one that's ever been seen whole? Do ye happen to know, Lat?"

"Yes, Grap. I read about it. One was caught in some nets off Newfoundland, which from the end of the body to the tip of the tentacular arms was fifty-eight and one-half feet long. The body was over twelve feet and the weight was over half a ton. But, as that fellow had his eight clutching arms only twenty-three feet long and three feet through, he would have been small to that monster whose branching arms were sixty feet long and five feet through. Why, that chap must have been three times as big, and have weighed a ton and a half! A whale wouldn't have much chance with him!"

"Ay, mates, yo' see," put in Mark, "they're bigger, even nor I said! Was I wrong when I

said one o' them critters could pull down a full-rigged ship?"

"Yes, Mark, you were quite wrong, 'way off," put in Latimer, quickly, for he saw, now, why his grandfather had wanted him to tell about the squid. "Those monsters don't ever come to the surface, for one thing, and they wouldn't fasten their suckers on anything of wood or iron, for another. For a third reason, all the waters around here are too shallow for them. They live where it's cold, and dark, and where the pressure of the water is so great that a man couldn't go a fraction of the distance down, in the strongest diving bell that ever was made. So, neither on the surface, nor anywhere that a diver can go, is he ever likely to find a giant squid."

One of the men, the best diver of the outfit, who had been listening intently, breathed a sigh of relief on hearing this statement.

"I sho' is glad to hear that, Mas'er Latimer!" he ejaculated. "Mark, hyar, he said they might come up any time, when the sea gits all greasy, like it is now."

"Not a bit of it!" answered Latimer confidently.

"An' when the sea gets all whitish and stinkin', like it is now, what's that for?" asked Mark.

"It isn't for anything," the boy responded promptly. "It's because of something. It's because there's no air in the water, when the sea gets dead calm. It's the wind, churning up the water, which keeps it pure at the top. If it wasn't for that, the surface fishes would die mighty fast. When it's a calm, like it is now, the sea begins to go short on air, an' all the millions upon millions of tiny sea-creatures which need a lot of air in the water die right away. They float up to the top and make that scum. That brings to the top, sometimes, queer creatures which live a little way down, to eat that scum. But the big squids stay down. No one has ever seen them."

To this simple explanation, Mark made no answer, and the negro coxswain, who, like most of his race, had a subtle instinct for the better man, grinned approvingly.

"We's obliged, Mas'er Latimer," he said, "fo', sho's yo's alive, we was all aginnin' to get mos' scared."

"No need to, Tom," the boy replied cheerfully. "You see the *Moray* doesn't seem to

mind it, and we'll reach harbor some time to-night."

The coxswain thanked the lad again, and the group of deck-hands broke up, leaving Mark without an audience.

"Yer books can do some good, Lat," the "Admiral" admitted, as they went back to the chart-house. "I could ha' tautened that fellow's jaw-tackle, easy enough, but explainin' was better. We won't have any more trouble, now."

But, in a voyage where every man on board is on the lookout for evil signs, they are sure to be found. Towards the end of the afternoon, first one, then another, and finally quite a flock of whistling curlews came hovering about the ship.

The "Admiral" cocked a weather eye at the birds and growled in stentorian tones a phrase which went back to the old wrecker days. Captain Voley looked round anxiously, for the tone of his father's voice showed acute annoyance.

"See those cussed birds?" ejaculated the old wrecker, catching his son's inquiring look.

"Yes, what about them?"

"Don't ye know what they're s'posed to be?"

"No," the captain of the *Moray* answered. "Bad luck?"

"The worst o' luck for us," the "Admiral" answered, "the Blacks'll think so, anyhow. They call 'em the souls o' Jews who've got rich by sendin' sailormen to sea on rotten vessels. Ay, I thought so!" he continued, seeing Mark in conversation with one of the deck-hands. "That sea-lawyer's got his tongue waggin' again."

"Shoot one or two of them," suggested Captain Voley, curtly. "That ought to show the fools they're nothing but birds."

"Got a shotgun in yer pocket?" queried the old wrecker, caustically.

The captain of the tug eyed the birds carefully. Then:

"Do you really think the men would be afraid of them, Father?" he asked.

"As long as a Black isn't scared," the "Admiral" rejoined, "he's as plucky as a white man. But if he gets panicky, Son Jerry, ye might as well turn the bows o' the *Moray* for home."

"I'm reckoned the best shot on Biminis," remarked the captain of the tug, reflectively. Then he leaned out of the chart-house window and called:

"Mark Hoveller!"

"Sir!"

"I suppose you're spinning that yarn about those birds bein' the ghosts o' Jews!"

"Well, sir, that's what they say about 'em."

"If they're ghosts, they can't be killed, eh?"

"No, sir, I s'pose not," the sailor answered.

A revolver flashed into the captain's hand and six shots rang out sharply, one after another. It was not idly that Jerry Voley had boasted himself the best shot on Biminis. Shooting a sea-bird with a revolver is tricky gun-play, but three birds fell dead on the water.

"So much for that ghost-yarn!" declared the captain of the *Moray* contemptuously, and drew in his head from the open window of the chart-house. The negroes laughed.

Towards dusk a few cat's-paws of wind ruffled the surface of the water, followed by those larger flurries which old-time sailors used to call "cat's-skins o' wind." By eight bells of the second dog-watch, there was a light breeze blowing and the sea had resumed its normal blue color.

The night passed without any misadventure, and Latimer, who was not keeping watch, slept until breakfast time. When he came out of the

cabin, rubbing his eyes sleepily, the first thing he noted was that the black cat had gone.

"Ghost Island is in sight then, I suppose?" he asked his father.

Captain Jerry Voley pointed to a low-lying swampy island, lush with mangrove trees, lying straight ahead of them. The *Moray* was coming up slowly, at half-speed, for the reefs in that neighborhood are dangerous, and uncharted. The morning was bright and peaceful, and despite the sinister reputation of the place, the crew seemed contented enough.

The *Moray* came up into soundings and dropped anchor. There was a slight hesitation among the crew when the order was given to put out the boat, allayed, however, when the "Admiral" roared out:

"Put a keg o' water in the boat, boys, but no provisions. We're not goin' ashore."

The "Admiral" and Latimer got in the boat, Captain Voley stayed aboard the *Moray*. The little boat poked in and out the several bays along the shore until the shore opened out into a deep bay, lined on either side with mangrove trees. The water was as clear as crystal, and Latimer, leaning over the side of the boat, with

a water glass, watched the bottom as the boat zigzagged up the bay from one side to the other.

"Here she is!" he cried suddenly.

"'Vast all!" roared the old wrecker, and the boat glided on.

Latimer waved with his hand, and the coxswain, not needing any orders, put the boat directly over the spot where the treasure hulk lay.

A hand-line with a light lead was dropped, showing, as Lincoln's story had told, that she was lying in four fathoms—twenty-four feet—of water.

"Looks like a good luck voyage, instead of bad luck one, eh, boys!" exclaimed the old wrecker. "Drop that little kedge, Tom, and buoy her. We'll get back for dinner, an' come out wi' the divin' apparatus in the afternoon. Look lively, lads, for we won't do any work around here after dark."

"I'd like to go ashore and explore, Grap," suggested Latimer. "I don't need any dinner. You leave me here and pick me up when you come back."

The old wrecker turned on him.

"I'll leave ye here, Lat," he said, "if ye're so set makin' comrades wi' ghosts. But the

Moray 'll not take ye on board again. Likely ye wouldn't see nothin', but queer invisible things might follow ye. Anyway, the crew might think it."

"But you don't really believe all that stuff about ghosts, Grap!" protested the boy.

"Ye think ye're spunky!" the old wrecker replied, "jest because ye're willing to risk something no one else wants to do. That isn't spunk, Lat, that's jest plain foolishness! Courage consists in doin' the things that have to be done, no matter what the risk. But takin' risks for the sake o' showin' off is a sign of a weak head.

"I can't prove that there are ghosts on yonder island, ye're right there. But ye can't prove, neither, that there aren't any. A good sailorman keeps as far away from breakers as he can, an' there's no man o' the *Moray* that's goin' ashore to run the risk o' beckonin' dead men aboard, if I can help it. I want no ghosts for shipmates!"

CHAPTER VI

A DUEL IN THE DEEP

THE instant they got back to the *Moray,* there being still half an hour before dinner time, Captain Jerry Voley set the crew at work getting out the diving dresses, and testing with minute care every joint of the suits, every foot of the hose and every detail of the pumps. He trusted no one but himself to supervise this, and the divers of the *Moray,* when they went over the side, knew that they could depend upon every detail.

With all such matters, the "Admiral" had nothing to do. A past master in the art of wrecking in its older forms, he left his son to handle all the details of modern salvage.

"How long can a diver stay under water, just diving naturally?" queried Latimer, as he stood beside his father, watching the preparation of the diving outfits. He had only been down once or twice, and then only in shallow waters, for Captain Voley understood the dan-

ger which men encounter when working with compressed air.

"In general, about half a minute," the captain of the tug responded. "Native pearl divers of the South Seas will stay a minute, and even longer. If the body be oiled and a piece of sponge, saturated with oil, be held in the mouth, it is not so difficult to stay under water two minutes. The world's record was made in a tank, in 1882, and was four minutes two and three-quarter seconds."

"That wouldn't be much use in modern salvage, would it?" commented the boy.

"A diver can do a lot in two minutes," the salver answered. "With a water slate, he can make a rapid sketch of the way a vessel lies and the location and size of the hole which sank her, for example. Of course, men can't work as long or as steadily without diving dresses, but, at a pinch, I think I could do about everything with natural divers that I can do now, if the wreck weren't too deep down. It would take longer, of course, and as time is often of prime consequence in salvage operations, such a delay would be a handicap."

"It takes us, nowadays, to handle things

properly," boasted Latimer, with the pride of youth in the achievements of his own generation. "Look at the modern diving dress!"

The captain of the *Moray* slewed half round and looked at his son with sharp reproof.

"I don't like that know-it-all air you put on sometimes, Latimer," he rebuked, sternly. "You're so confoundedly cocksure about everything, and you always seem to think that because a thing is new, it must be good! That idea is going to get you into trouble, some day. As a matter of fact, diving apparatus isn't new at all. Even the ancients knew about it."

"Did they, Dad?" queried Latimer, in a humbler tone. "I didn't know."

"Yes, they did," the salver replied emphatically, and in a nettled tone. "The Ancient Greeks used apparatus. Aristotle mentions both the diving bell and the diving dress. He says that, in his time, divers had tubes leading from the air to a case around their heads, by which they could draw down air to breathe, and also that some of them used a metal vessel which was sunk in the water so that the divers could get air from it.

"Not only that, but Thucydides tells of

divers who were able to stay under water long enough to build sharp-pointed artificial reefs below the sea in the entrances to their harbors on which enemy vessels would strike and be sunk. It seems queer to us, nowadays, but in the siege of Syracuse, there was actually under-water fighting. Divers were sent down by the Greeks to saw away the submarine barriers, and these met the divers of the Syracusans. Each tried to cut the air-hose of the others, and history tells that the Greek divers triumphed."

"As long ago as that!" ejaculated Latimer, astonished. "When was that, Dad?"

"In 415 B. C., over two thousand years ago. So you see, Son, wreckers and salvers were busy, then. The same tactics were employed when Alexander the Great besieged Tyre nearly a century later, and diving bells had been sufficiently developed for Alexander himself to go down in a machine which was called a 'colympha' which, it is on record, 'kept a man dry beneath the water, while allowing him air and light.' You don't call that modern, do you?"

"But that wasn't like a modern diving dress, anyway," protested the boy, eager to defend himself. "And that was only for war!"

"There you're wrong again," his father answered. "The ancient island and city of Rhodes, which was founded even before Ancient Greece, had special laws regarding divers who went down into the sea to gather treasure from sunken vessels. If the wreck were only twelve feet below the surface, the diver got one-third of all the treasure found, if it were twenty-four feet down, he got a half, if it were forty-eight feet down, he received two-thirds. There was a regular guild of deep-sea divers at Rhodes, and Rhodian divers and their 'instruments'—whatever they may have been—were sent all over the Mediterranean.

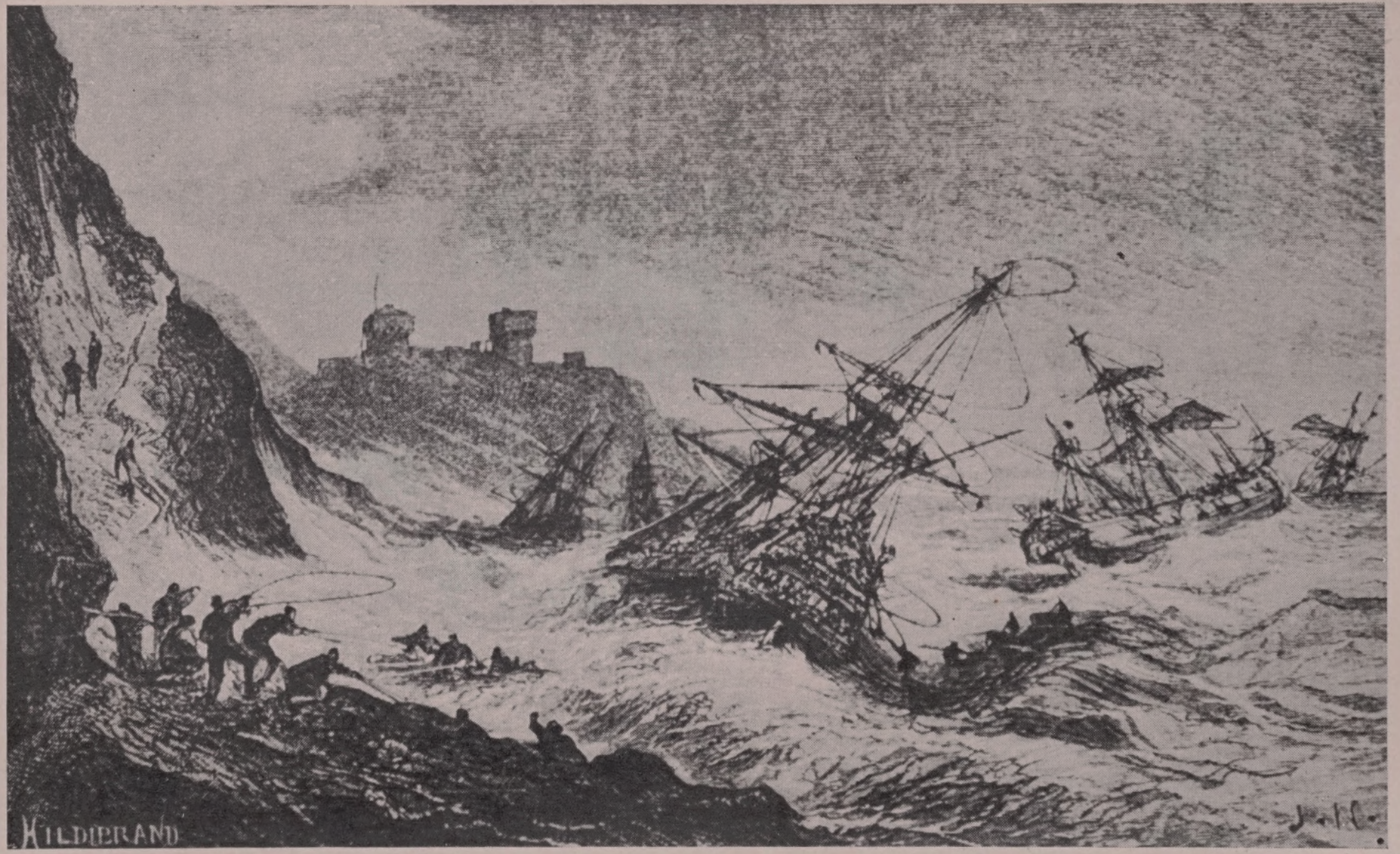
"If you come down to mediæval times," the salver continued, "one of the earliest pictures ever printed was a wood-cut in Vegetius' 'Art of War' showing a diver walking about on the bed of a river, with a double tube leading from a cap fastened about his mouth, to a sort of floating mouth on the surface of the river, one tube to breathe in by, the other for the expelled air.

"Roger Bacon, the famous English scientist, in the thirteenth century, pointed out that any large vessel, if it were lowered into the water,

mouth down, and kept exactly level, would retain the air. Such a vessel on the rim of which three legs were fixed, like a tripod, was lowered to the bottom of a river. Natural divers then went down, worked for a minute, swam to the inverted pot, filled their lungs with fresh air again, and so went on working.

"Soon after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, when the rich galleons had been scattered by storm all around the coasts of Scotland and Ireland, there was a great demand for treasure divers. Usually, however, the ships lay in deep water. One clever fellow, named Colquhoun, was employed in the Bay of Tobermory, in the north of Scotland, to try to find the treasure from the main treasure ship of the Armada, which was sunk in those waters. Colquhoun knew nothing of the diving-bell, but he rigged up a bellows of leather, and a long leather pipe, the end of which he took in his mouth. With this device he was able to stay below the water as much as ten minutes, and got up some small quantity of gold.

"In 1715, a Devonshire diver, named John Lethbridge, who was also engaged in hunting for treasure from one of the ships of the Spanish



THE END OF THE SPANISH ARMADA.

The galleons of Spain driven on the rocky coasts of Scotland and Ireland. Some treasure—but not a great deal—has been recovered by modern divers.

Courtesy of Cassell and Co.

THE TREASURE-SHIP OF THE SPANISH ARMADA STRIKING ON THE ROCKS WITH $6,000,000 IN GOLD IN HER MONEY CHESTS.

Armada, invented a diving dress with flexible sleeves. The force-pump had not been developed with sufficient perfection, and it was too much work to draw the air down with the lungs. So other Devonshire divers attached Lethbridge's dress to a strong leather water-tight case, holding about half a hogshead of air, the supply being ample for about a quarter of an hour.

"Just five years later, Latimer, the first practical diving-bell of modern pattern was made. It was invented by Dr. Edmund Halley, Secretary of the Royal Society, in England. It was made of wood, covered with lead, was round in shape, three feet across at the top and five feet across at the bottom. There was a window in the top to let in the light. It could be suspended at any depth required.

"As the force-pump was not yet in use, barrels were used to provide the supply of fresh air. Two barrels always were used, so that one could be on its way to the top for refilling, while the air from the other barrel was being employed. The barrels, too, were weighted with lead. In each barrel there was a hole at the top and the bottom, and to the hole in the top was

fastened a leather tube so weighted that it would fall below the level of the bottom of the barrel, so that no air could escape. When, however, the diver in the bell picked up the end of the tube which led to the lower hole, the water flowing into the lower hole forced the air out of the barrel into the diving bell.

"Impure air in the bell was let out through a tap, from time to time, as was required, and, by sending down the barrels in quick succession, one after another, the air was kept in so pure a condition that five persons remained in the bell, at a depth of nine fathoms, for more than an hour and a half at the time.

"Two years later, Halley further improved this bell by devising a metal and glass helmet with a long pipe leading to the bell. By using this, a diver was able to get out of the bell and walk on the bottom of the sea with comfort, returning to the bell, from time to time."

By this time, dinner was called, but Captain Jerry, having started on one of his favorite subjects, could not be stopped, and talked incessantly all through the meal.

"Halley's Diving Bell," he continued, waving his fork for emphasis, "was improved by

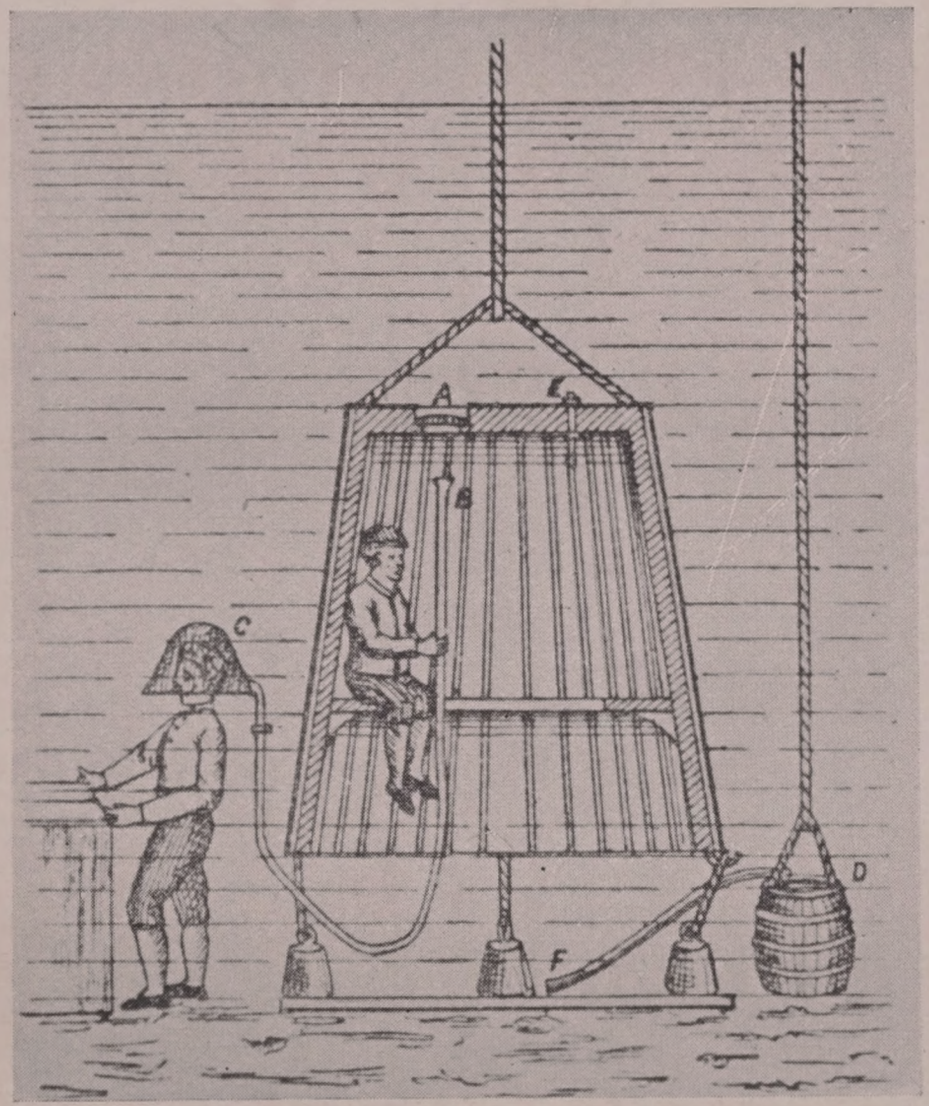
Spalding, of Edinburgh. The Spalding bell was not made heavy, like the Halley bell, but was divided into two water-tight compartments. When the upper compartment was full of water, the bell would sink. When the divers in the lower compartment wanted to rise, they allowed the air from the lower part to escape into the upper. This expelled the water and thus the divers were able to rise or sink at will. This freedom of movement was an important improvement for use when working on vessels which lay upright on the sea bottom.

"The next big step onward, though, was taken by John Smeaton, in 1791. Instead of the usual bell-shaped or conical tub of wood, covered with lead, he sank a heavy cast-iron chest. But—and this was the main point of his invention—the divers did not need to trouble themselves all the time about the supply of fresh air. That was provided for them by a force-pump which was worked from a boat on the water's surface. This divided the responsibility and greatly advanced the diver's efficiency. Small improvements have been made since that time, but Smeaton's general principle remains unchanged."

"And I suppose," hazarded Latimer, "that the modern diving dress was a compound of Lethbridge's idea of the helmet and Smeaton's idea of the force-pump."

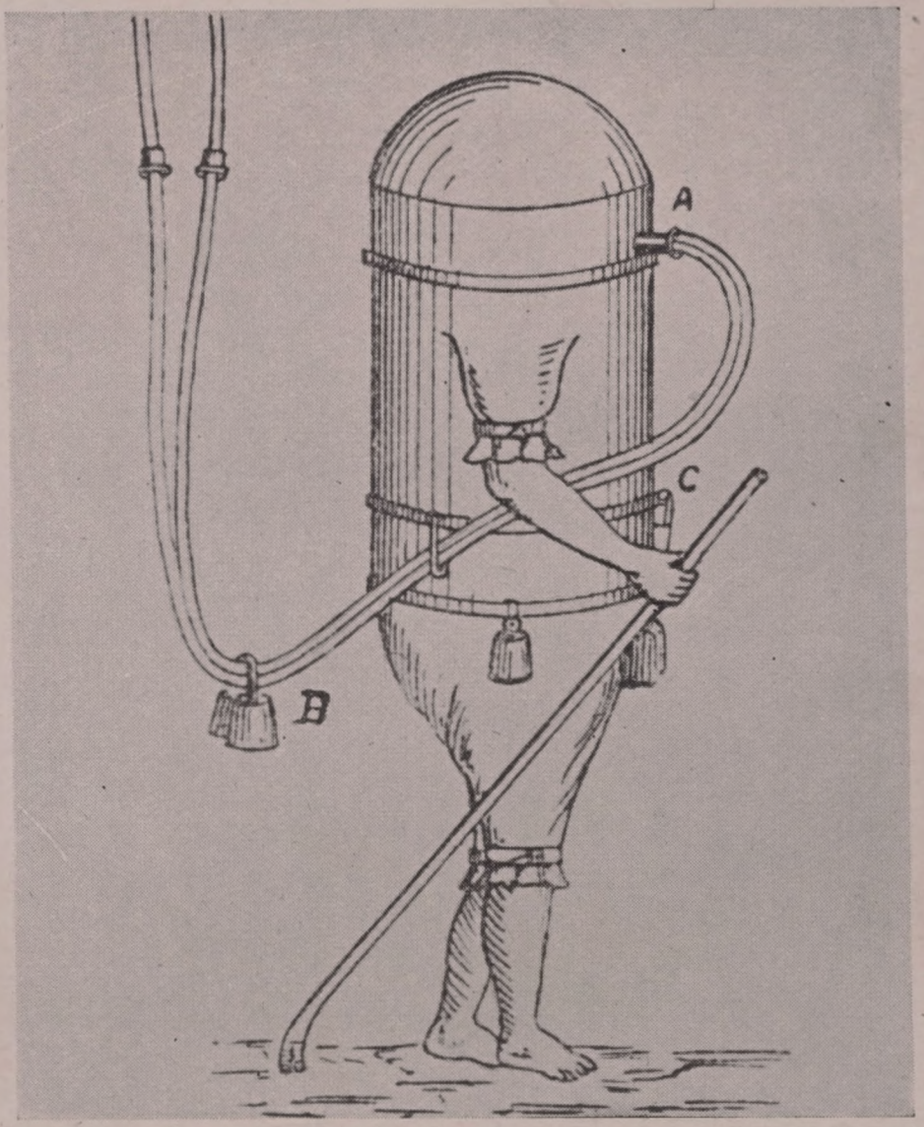
"Exactly," agreed the salver. "And there was not long to wait. Smeaton's Bell had been first used in 1791, and in 1798, Kleingert, of Breslau, invented the first modern diving dress. It was shaped something like an egg and was made of metal, with a single window. It only went down as far as the diver's hips, where it was fastened with a tight rubber bandage directly to the diver's skin. There were short water-tight sleeves through which the arms were thrust, though this always proved one of the weak points of the dress. Weights were suspended around the waist, making the diver just a trifle heavier than the water. By working a small piston in the lower part of the dress, which enabled him to admit a greater quantity of air, the diver could rise slowly to the surface.

"Unfortunately, the force-pump was not sufficiently perfected to work satisfactorily, and Kleingert had to go back to the old system of Vegetius, letting the diver breathe directly by a long pipe to the outer air. This prevented any



THE FIRST DIVING BELL (1717).

Halley's invention. *A*, escape valve; *B*, breathing tube; *C*, inverted air cap; *D*, barrel of air; *E*, valve; *F*, air pipe.



THE FIRST DIVING DRESS (1797).

Kleingert's invention. *A*, air tube from the surface; *B*, weights to keep tube low; *C*, escape valve.

Courtesy of Everybody's Magazine.

MECHANICAL MAN OUTSIDE; HUMAN, INSIDE.

Armored diving suit to resist deep sea pressure, with arms and legs worked by levers. The air is self-contained.

deep-water work. So, in those days, the diving dress was used only for shallow-water operations, and the diving-bell for deep water.

"Then came along, twenty years later, the invention of Siebe, of Hamburg. He devised a helmet and shoulder-piece for divers and employed the force-pump. This worked fairly well, but had its dangers. One of the worst of these was that the diver dared not stoop and was in peril if he stumbled, for, being an 'open dress,' the water would fill it at once. Siebe devoted his entire life to the improvement of the diving dress and to the perfection of the force-pump. The up-to-date diver's outfit, as we have it to-day, is merely a modification of Siebe's dress of a century ago."

"What's the greatest depth ever reached in a modern diving dress, Dad?" asked Latimer.

"Well," said the captain of the *Moray* thoughtfully, "with the ordinary diving dress, I guess the greatest depth ever reached was made by a diver called Hooper, in Pichidanque Bay in South America. He made seven descents to the wreck of the *Cap Horn,* at a depth of thirty-three and one-half fathoms (two hundred and one feet) and, on one of these descents,

he remained down for forty-two minutes. That was a marvellous record because the pressure at that depth is over eighty-four pounds to the square inch.

"Another very famous case was that of a Spanish diver, named Erostarbe, who, from a depth of one hundred and eighty-two feet, recovered nine thousand pounds sterling ($45,000) in silver from the wreck of the steamer *Skyro,* south of Cape Finisterre. An even larger sum, seventy thousand pounds in gold ($350,000), was brought up by an English diver named Lambert, from the wreck of the Spanish mail steamer *Alphonso XIII,* which was sunk in one hundred and sixty-two feet of water off the Canary Islands. But such depths as these are unusual. Generally, one hundred and fifty feet is reckoned as about the maximum at which salvage operations can be done. Even at thirty feet where the pressure is a trifle less than half a pound to the square inch, this means a pressure of sixteen tons on the body. At one hundred and fifty feet, allowing for increased ratio, the pressure would be considerably over one hundred tons. You see why one hundred and fifty feet is nearly the limit."

"Why!" exclaimed Latimer in surprise, "I thought, nowadays, men could go down ever so much farther than that!"

"Some of the deep-sea divers of the United States Navy have made better records," the captain of the *Moray* answered, "but that has been with an entirely different type of diving dress. These divers carry down with them small tanks of highly compressed air, which they can let out, little by little.

"The most remarkable case was the recovery of the submarine 'F. 4' from three hundred and six feet of water off Honolulu. The Navy had two large corps of divers, and only those in the most perfect condition of health were allowed to descend, and they only for a few minutes each. Down below, they did little but direct the work done from the surface.

"Of course, if modern inventors perfect the new 'armored diving suits,' there's no saying how far a man may be able to go down."

"Armored suits, Son Jerry!" put in the "Admiral." "I never heard of 'em before. What are they?"

"I've never seen one, myself, Father," the salver replied. "They're quite new. But I've

seen plenty of descriptions and pictures of them. First of all, they're different from the regular diving dresses because they're made of armor steel, the strongest and the toughest known, so made as to be able to resist an enormous pressure. They're all braced inside. They're not a dress, really, they're a sort of movable frame. Of course, being so heavy, a man can't move his arms or legs in them at all, either in the water or out.

"The diver has to be hoisted up with a derrick, like a piece of freight, and lowered into the water. He can't walk, even on the bottom, by the strength of his leg muscles, but, inside the armor, there are levers, and, by using these, he can shove first one foot forward and then the other, so that, in a shuffling sort of way, he can get along. It's the same way with the arms. They're worked by levers from inside, too. With a good deal of trouble, a diver in an 'armored suit' might be able to put a chain under a hull or some simple act like that. He could never move around, the way ordinary divers can."

"And air, Dad? How does he get air?"

"From compressed air tanks which he takes

down with him," was the reply. "Oh, the armored devices can be made to work. But they're very costly, heavy to handle and a bit dangerous. I don't think they'll be of much use except for really big salvage operations, such as trying to get the *Lusitania* up from the bottom of the sea, or something like that. Even so, the range of armored suits is limited, for, after you get down deep enough, even if the armored frame is strong enough to resist the enormous pressure, the weight of the water is so terrific that it pinches the joints of the arms and legs and makes them immovable. So far, inventors haven't been able to succeed in combining flexibility with a resistance to hundreds of tons of pressure."

"Do ye think, Son Jerry, that wrecks as deep down as the *Lusitania* can ever be recovered?"

"Not with any devices we have now, Father, no. The *Lusitania* lies in eighty-two fathoms of water (nearly five hundred feet), and, at that depth, even an armored suit becomes unmanageable."

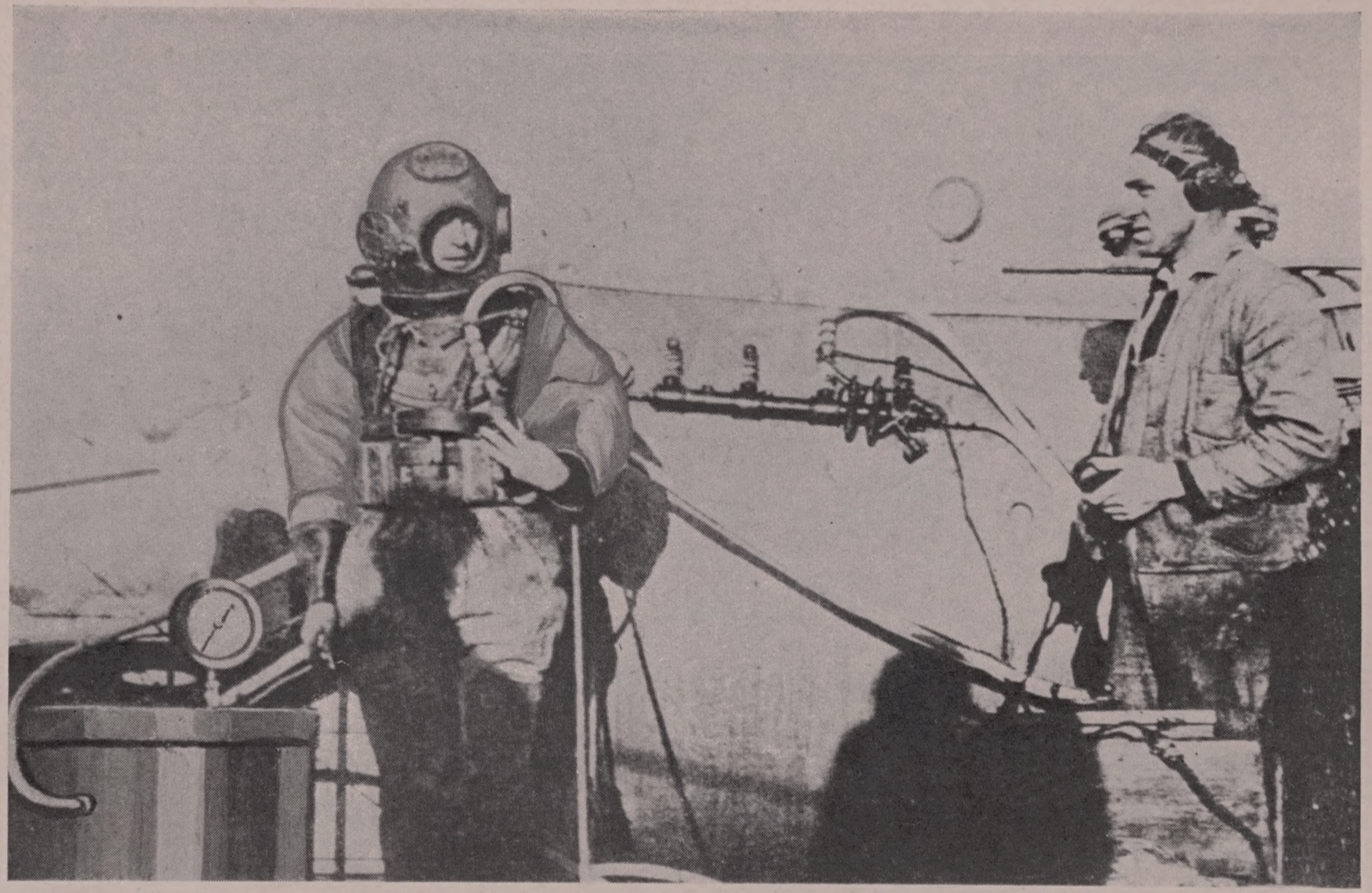
"How about submarines, Dad?" queried Latimer.

"None that we have now would be of any use

for such depths," the captain replied. "A submarine cannot go down deep in the water, even what they call the double-skin type. During the World War, when every nation was trying to outstrip the other in making submarines which would be able to escape depth bombs, two hundred feet was considered the extreme depth limit of safety in salt water. In general practice, safety appliances to keep a submarine from going down too far are set at between eighty and one hundred feet. I'm not saying that, with the knowledge of submarines that we have now, under-sea craft couldn't be built strong enough to go down five hundred feet. I think they could. But they'd be terribly expensive. One at a hundred thousand pounds ($500,000) would be cheap.

"No, I think the *Moray* will try to get along without armored suits and specially built wreck-searching submarines. I'm willing enough to go ahead with the diving dress that an ordinary man can handle in an ordinary way, and I'll pick my wrecks in shallow water, when I can."

The "Admiral" grunted approval, but Latimer, as he followed his father out on the tug's



Courtesy of Bull. of Pan. Amer. Union.

THE CHAMPION DIVER—AN AMERICAN.

The deepest point yet reached in the sea in a non-armored type of dress was attained by a sailor in the U. S. Navy.

Courtesy of Cassell and Co.

"HAUL UP! HAUL UP! A SHARK!"

A diver imperilled while inspecting a sunken cattle-ship, the drowned animals on board having attracted finny monsters of prey from far and near.

deck, thought of the great ships lying in the ocean depths and longed to be at work, raising them.

The *Moray* had brought with her from Biminis her big specially built boat which was used for diving operations. This was fitted up with powerful triple-cylinder force-pumps and diving apparatus. She carried a small motor and was ballasted deep, so that a diver, in his heavy suit, could climb over the side of the boat without making her turn turtle.

Captain Voley, the assistant engineer and the two divers went in that boat, together with Tom, the coxswain, and one other of the most trusted members of the crew. These two men were to handle the force-pumps, where absolute regularity and attention might mean life or death to the diver.

Latimer was with Mark Hoveller and six of the *Moray's* crew, in the other boat. Their duty was merely to stand by in case of need, and, if there was any salvage to be done, to handle the cargo. A very few minutes brought them to the treasure hulk, the location immediately picked out by the floating buoy.

The two negro divers, experts in their profes-

sion, began to get into their cumbrous suits. These were made of two layers of a specially prepared thin canvas, with a layer of pure rubber between. They covered the whole body, from the feet to the neck, like the sleeping suits that little children wear. They were fitted around the neck and shoulders with vulcanized rubber collar-plates, or bands, in which were screw-holes corresponding to similar screw-holes in the combined helmet and breastplate. The sleeves were fitted with special rubber fastenings on the wrists, leaving the hands free. As one of the negro divers had said to Latimer, laughingly, the first time the boy had seen him don the dress:

"Yo' see, Mas'er Latimer, my skin's done water-tight!"

The boots used by the divers of the *Moray* had leather uppers, beechwood inner-soles and outer soles of thick lead, fastened to the wood by copper rivets. Each boot weighed about sixteen pounds, and they were fastened to the instep and calf by heavy leather straps and buckles. In addition to this weight, each of the divers fastened to his back and to his chest two weights of forty pounds each. These two weights and the boots, one hundred and twelve

pounds in all, kept the divers solid on their feet.

The helmets and breastplates, however, were the most important parts of the outfits. These are always made of copper, with gun-metal valves. The most important is the inlet valve, to which the air-pipe is connected. As the air comes in, it passes over three conduits above the front and each of the side windows. The diver, by this method, breathes the fresh air the moment it enters the helmet and, at the same time, this device prevents the condensation of the diver's breath on the glass windows and keeps them clear.

The next most important valve is the outlet valve, to get rid of the surplus air. This is within the diver's control, and according to the degree that he tightens or loosens it, so he will have more or less air, since the supply coming to him by the inlet valve from the force-pump above, is constant. Moreover, the outlet valve is the means whereby he can rise in the water, or sink at will. Those who have seen a diver going into the water will have noticed that there is a constant stream of bubbles pouring from the top of his helmet. That is because the outlet valve

is well open, and, since the air is not staying in the dress, he sinks. When he reaches the bottom, however, or the depth to which he wishes to go, the diver begins, little by little, to screw tighter this valve, until less and less air escapes. Thus, according to the amount of air he breathes, and to his depth in the water, the diver can secure for himself precisely the quantity of air he needs.

There are also, on the helmet, two metal eyes. To one of these the air-pipe is secured, a few inches above its junction at the valve, so that, as the diver moves in this direction or that, there shall be no free motion at the inlet valve, which might weaken it and cause a leak. The other eye is for a strong hemp life-line, a jerk on which will cause the diver to be hauled up to the surface quickly in case of danger, such as might arise from a rip in the diving dress made by a sharp rock or a rusty spike in a piece of wreckage. Or, the danger might be an attack by a shark or a sword-fish. In the most modern types of helmet there is also a connection for an under-sea telephone, but these the divers on the *Moray* did not possess. The glass windows at the side of the helmet are fixed, that on the front

is either screwed in or works on a hinged joint like a ship's scuttle.

The breastplate, which is an integral part of the helmet, is fitted around its lower edge with metal bands and screws which correspond exactly to the screw-holes in the vulcanized rubber collar of the dress. In some styles, the water-tight joint is made by a slight double interlocking turn on the breastplate. All this is fitted on the diver, while the front glass remains open. This latter is not closed until the air-pipe is adjusted and the force-pumps have begun.

The diver's air-pipe is made of alternate layers of specially treated canvas and rubber with a steel spiral wire embedded. A heavy sheath-knife and kit of tools are carried at the belt, and, often, a submarine electric flash-lamp.

The "self-contained" diving dress is the same as the former in all respects except for the question of air. In place of the air-tube, leading to the surface, the diver carries a knapsack consisting of a steel cylinder containing oxygen compressed to a pressure of one hundred and twenty atmospheres (about eighteen hundred pounds to the square inch), and some lined

chambers containing either caustic soda or caustic potash. Helmet, cylinder, and chambers are all connected by protected tubes. The breath exhaled by the diver passes through a valve into the chambers of caustic which absorb the carbonic acid gas, and the air can thus be used over and over again with replenishment from the oxygen in the steel cylinder. This self-contained dress has the advantage of rendering a diver free from the encumbrance of the long air-tube overhead, but the air is not so good and divers with this apparatus are apt to suffer from terrible headaches.

At last the long preparations were made. The divers were ready. The force-pumps began their operations of pumping air into the dresses. The glass front windows were closed tightly and the air began to hiss out through the valve at the top. First one diver, then the other, descended over the side of the pumping boat and sank to the bottom. Latimer, in the other boat, floated overhead, watching their movements through the water-glass. He could see them as clearly as though there were no water between. By an optical illusion, they seemed to be only a few inches below the surface.

The sea-bottom, as customary in coral formations in the West Indies, was of white-yellow sand, with, here and there, large clumps of brain-coral, on and around which grew a wealth of golden seaweeds, tall black rods and purple sea-fans. Sea-anemones of vivid and delicate shades waved their tentacles in the limpid water. Scarlet and green sponges lay on the bottom, interspersed with fantastic-spined sea-urchins.

Through this brilliant sea-garden swam the gorgeous scarlet-and-blue parrot-wrasses, the peacock-eyed butterfly-fishes, the white-and-gold angel-fishes, the orange-striped sergeant-majors, the dainty four-eyes looking like great night moths of the water, ruddy squirrel-fishes and white and canary-colored grunts innumerable. The green and the spotted morays coiled their eel-like lengths in cavities of the coral, or flashed forth after prey. The black grouper, ever ready to change color, drifted like a dim shadow over the sand. The fishing-fish, with wide-open jaws, set its crimson-hued body beside a scarlet sponge and waited for small fish to strike at the feeler-like extension from the head dangling like a baited line before the hungry mouth. The smaller octopus, in a fit of indus-

try, shot forth from the hole where it lurked and spread its repulsive tentacles over the unwary crab.

Marvellous are the sea-gardens of the coral reefs, which know no season, but blaze with color and life all the year around. The scene was not new to Latimer. He had seen it many a hundred times before, but he never tired of it.

Now, however, he was watching the divers.

Strange things were happening below the water!

The first diver, easily distinguished from his comrade because his helmet was of tinned copper and shone silver-like, while the other's had a copper sheen, hurried—so far as walking with leaden feet can be called hurrying—and was the first to reach the treasure hulk. Latimer expected to see him climb laboriously on to the deck of the sunken ship, but, instead, he turned and faced his slowly advancing companion.

No sooner had the latter come within reach than Tin Helmet raised his arm and gave his comrade a sudden push.

Latimer was startled, for, though he knew how playful the negroes were together, he was

aware how dangerous it is to play pranks in the water.

The diver in the copper helmet staggered back under the push, but did not lose his balance. He came forward again, but, evidently not desirous of any more jokes of that sort, reached the sunken hulk a little distance from his fellow.

Latimer, tilting his water-glass, could follow the movements of both men.

No sooner had the second diver touched the treasure ship, however, than he, too, turned and came forward. Tin Helmet and Copper Helmet faced each other in the depth.

Latimer knew that divers who had no telephonic communication with each other under water, sometimes conversed by signs, and he watched eagerly to see what the gestures might signify.

Then, with a motion which seemed to be intended to be swift, but which was enforcedly slow and cumbrous because of the stiff diving dress and the friction of the water, Tin Helmet raised his hand and made a clutch as though he would seize his comrade's air-tube.

Surely this was a curious sort of play!

Again Copper Helmet stepped back. He was near enough to his companion to be able to see his face through the glass window of the helmet and to be able to judge of the purpose of his acts. In his turn, he squatted on the sea floor and broke off a small coral-growth which he poised and tried to throw.

Naturally, with the restraint of the diving dress impeding him and because of the difficulty of throwing anything through the water, the heavy coral went forward but a few inches, then dropped and sank to the bottom.

Both men came closer and Copper Helmet, negro fashion, tried to butt at his companion with his heavy diver's helmet, but drew back as the other again tried to clutch at the air-tube.

The movements, seen from above, were strange and incomprehensible, for the slow wavings of the arms in the water had all the queer unrealism which the ultra-rapid camera gives. But when Tin Helmet, with deliberation, approached closer to his comrade, drew his big knife and stabbed forward, Latimer suddenly realized that he was watching a duel beneath the sea.

"They're fighting! They're fighting!" he cried.

At that instant, Copper Helmet, putting his hand to the side of his head-piece, tightened the escape valve. At once his dress filled with air and he began to rise. Just as he was at the height of his comrade's head, he gave a vicious kick with his leaden-soled boot, full in the front window glass of his comrade's helmet.

Latimer leaped to his feet in wild excitement, almost upsetting the boat.

"Haul up, Tom! Haul quick!" he yelled. "You, Sam, haul, too!"

The coxswain did not hesitate a second. From the tones of the boy's voice he realized that some grave danger was menacing his comrades. Dropping the pump rod, he leaped to the life-lines and with one or two hand-over-hand movements, hauled the diver with the tinned helmet up from the bottom of the sea.

His front glass was cracked clear across, but it was not smashed.

A second later, Copper Helmet was hauled to the surface also.

Both men climbed aboard the pumping boat, and busy fingers unclamped the windows.

The instant they were open, both the divers began to shout madly, and would have launched themselves at each other, but for the weight of the heavy boots on their feet.

Captain Jerry Voley stepped between them, and ordered the helmets removed.

"Now, Cæsar," he said, "you're level-headed enough generally! What's all the row about?"

The diver, a man nearly forty years of age, and known as one of the best experts on the Bahamas, passed his hand across his forehead and his eyes, as if dazed.

"I—I dunno, sah!" he answered lamely.

"Have you had any trouble with Job, here?"

"I, sah? No, sah!"

"Latimer says he saw you strike at him."

"Yes, sah, I sho' done struck at him."

"Why?"

"I—I dunno, sah. I'd jes' put mah hand on the wreck when somethin' come an' whispered in mah ear:

"'Kill him, Cæsar! Kill him!' An' then, sah, fust thing I know, we was a-fightin'! An' I dunno what for."

The captain of the *Moray* turned to the other diver.

Courtesy of Cassell and Co.

A FIGHT UNDER THE SEA.

Treachery did not end with the war; English divers have found foreign spies trying to prevent the salvage of vessels they were paid to save.

Courtesy of Merritt & Chapman Wrecking Co.

DIVER'S DRESS OF MODERN PATTERN AS USED BY BIG SALVAGE COMPANIES TODAY.

"And what's your story, Job?"

The second diver, a younger man, was evidently still in the clutch of anger.

"He jes' set out to kill me," he panted, "an' I was a-goin' to get him!"

"Did you want to kill him, too?"

"Yes, sah!" The tone was emphatic.

"Have you had any trouble with Cæsar?"

"No, sah," the second diver answered, "nothin' at all. Me an' him's always been good friends."

"And when did you first have this feeling that you wanted to kill your friend?"

The negro thought a minute.

"Seems to me, sah," he said, "it was like Cæsar says, jes' when I touched that boat." Then an explanation flashed across him. "She's hoodooed! Dat ol' wreck's done hoodooed! She's done got a pirate witch-spell on her! Yes, sah, dat's what it is!"

Captain Jerry shrugged his shoulders.

"You wouldn't go down again, I suppose?"

"Me, sah?" He shuffled his leaden-booted feet an inch or two backwards. "Not for a thousand pounds, sah!"

"How about you, Cæsar?"

The expert shook his head.

"Yo' know how 'tis, sah," he answered. "I've been with the 'Admiral' an' yo', sah, ever sence I was big enough to pull on a rope, an' if yo' says to me, 'Cæsar, go down again!' I'll go. But I'd sooner yo' didn't ask me, sah."

The captain of the *Moray,* while he had the respect of his men, was given none of the half-fearful admiration and whole-souled loyalty which was readily accorded to the "Admiral," and he was a clever enough man to know where his authority halted.

In this dilemma, for he saw it to be one, Latimer spoke up.

"Let me go, Dad!" he suggested. "Four fathoms is shallow enough. You know, I went down nine fathoms once. If there's what Job calls a 'pirate witch-spell' on the old hulk, that won't hurt me. I'm proof against spells."

Captain Jerry turned a thoughtful look on his son.

"Ay," he agreed, "it isn't deep enough to do you any harm, and you're not likely to get scared easily. Now that we're here, it would be foolish to go away without at least finding out what is in the hulk. Besides, I gave my word to Mark

Hoveller there that we'd do our best to get the stuff. Very well, Latimer, suppose you try!"

Job, grinning broadly in relief, commenced to divest himself of his diving dress, but Cæsar made no move.

"Well, Cæsar," put in the captain, impatiently, "are you going to stand there all day?"

"No, sah, Cap'n Voley," the old diver answered, "but if Mas'er Latimer is goin' down, I'm goin' to put on mah helmet again. Yo' can't tell, sah, he might be needin' help, an' it ain't never goin' to be said that I stood by an' saw a Voley goin' into danger. I won't go down, not onless I have to, but I'll stand by. Yes, sah, I'll stand ready."

The captain of the *Moray* nodded approval, and turned to supervise the enclosing of Latimer in the suit Job had worn.

Ten minutes later he was ready. A last word to his father, and then the pumps were started, the window was closed and Latimer slipped over the side to visit the treasure hulk on which there lay the curse of a "pirate witch-spell."

CHAPTER VII

SPANISH TREASURE

In spite of his freedom from superstition, Latimer could not repress a feeling of anxiety as he lowered himself in the water. It was one thing to scoff at sea phantoms and haunted hulks, when standing on a ship's deck; it was another thing entirely to descend into the depths of the sea to face them.

Half-way to the treasure hulk, a feebleness of the knees assailed the lad. He had plenty of courage, but he had imagination, too. His nerves began to play tricks with him. The dark shape of a black grouper lumbering through the water startled him. The boy had not had much experience in diving, and his fear, however much he kept it down, brought his breath short and fast.

When only a few feet from the hulk, he began to feel panicky. The negro's words recurred to him, and, in his mind's eye, he saw again the two divers savagely trying to grapple each other. He had to struggle with himself not to turn coward and retreat.

The fear of ridicule, however, especially from the negro members of the crew, proved an even more potent force than the blind terror of the unknown. With a desperate effort, Latimer screwed himself together, stumbled rather than walked to the sunken hulk and deliberately placed his hand upon the wood.

The moment he touched the wood, a sudden feeling of atrocious rage possessed him. The impulse to destroy clutched at his reason. Had there been a comrade near, scarcely could he have combated the desire to slay. Being alone, the impulse was foiled. It was quickly succeeded by an equally violent urge to suicide, so strong that, had the boy already drawn his large sheath-knife, he might have turned it upon himself in that instant of mania.

The idea of suicide, however, was in itself so alien to the boy's nature that there was an instinctive revulsion, so strong as to be almost a shock. This shock cleared his brain, and, like a flash, Latimer realized that he was himself falling a victim to the "pirate witch-spell" of which the negro divers had spoken. As the words occurred to his mind, despite the tumult of his feelings, the boy laughed. The gust of laughter

blew away the morbidity from his brain, not to return.

Although Latimer did not realize it, "hauntings" are almost always of this character, and can generally be exorcised thus. One is afraid of seeing a ghost, startled into terror if a ghost should appear, but speedily calmed if the ghost remains visible for several minutes. A fright never lasts long—though its effects may do so—and unreasoned terror is almost always followed by a reaction to contempt.

The boy, under the stress of this latter feeling, thumped jocosely on the timbers of the sunken hulk, and dared the ghosts of the pirates to come out.

Nothing moved.

The sun shone brightly through the clear water, casting that gray-green light which all divers know, and, as Latimer looked around him at the vivid color and vitality of the sea-garden, his spirits rose again. After all, he had faced the "spell," whatever it was, and got the better of it. He could continue his under-water exploration, now, with a quiet mind.

Slightly closing the escape cock in his diving dress, and remembering his father's parting in-

structions to do so slowly, Latimer allowed his diving dress to inflate just enough to lift him from the bottom, that he might rise the nine or ten feet necessary to reach the deck of the hulk. On finding himself near the rail, he loosened the escape valve again to deflate the dress and give him weight, and descended on the hulk's deck.

The wood was slimy and, since the deck listed a good deal to starboard, difficult to walk on. Evidently the hulk had been a two-masted vessel of some kind, probably a schooner. The cook's galley was the only deck-house, showing that the fo'c's'le and the cabins must be below.

One of the doors of the galley was open, and Latimer looked in. Nothing was to be seen but a dilapidated stove, partly eaten up by rust and fallen in. A copper pot was hanging on the wall. A china plate, covered with scum, lay on a locker, the wood of which was so rotten that when Latimer drew his large sheath-knife and struck it, the knife went through the wood like paper.

It was dark in the galley, for the gray-green light penetrated but little, but it was not too dark to reveal some sort of movement within.

It might be an octopus!

Latimer drew back as promptly as leaden feet allowed. He had no wish to encounter any of those repulsive tentacled creatures, which, even when small, constitute a minor peril to divers. The large ones, of course, are seriously dangerous. The galley was best left alone.

Walking forward, cautiously, Latimer noticed that the fo'c's'le hatch was open, a matter of little consequence, for the boy knew that there was no likelihood of the treasure being there. It might be in the hold. More probably, it would be stored in the cabin.

The main hatch was still covered with tarpaulin and stood out black. Sea-growths of every kind had taken root in the wreck, and Latimer's leaden boots crushed barnacles and limpets at every step. But the tarred canvas had suited neither sea-plant nor sea-creature. The iron battens across the hatch had rusted away, but the red stain across the tarpaulin showed where they had been.

Making his way aft, the boy came to the companionway to the cabin. Near the stern, the vessel looked as if she had been under water only a few years. The binnacle lamp, of brass, was

green with verdigris, but it still stood. The wheel, made of greenheart wood, showed slimy and that was all. The skylight of the cabin, with the glass windows encased in teak-wood, was whole and not a pane of glass was broken. The companionway, also of teak, and which had copper hinges and copper locks, was as firm as ever. Latimer's knife made no impression on it. It would be necessary to break these doors open with a crowbar or an axe.

Lacking both tools and experience, this brief examination was as much as the boy could do. He had made the preliminary survey, at least. It would need expert divers to handle the actual salvage.

Letting himself over the hulk's side, Latimer sank to the sandy ocean floor, walked to where the pumping boat floated overhead, inflated his dress and raised himself to the surface. He had not been down more than twenty minutes, and that in shallow water, but his head was thumping and his lungs were sore. It was a tremendous relief when the front window glass of his helmet was opened and he could breathe the outer air again.

"Well?" said Captain Voley, as soon as the

window had been unfastened. "Did you see any ghosts?"

"No, Dad," answered the boy, "but I felt them!"

He turned to the negro diver, who was listening anxiously.

"For just about a quarter of a minute, Cæsar, I felt pretty nearly the way you said you felt. It was mighty queer! But, just as soon as I got hold of myself, and laughed at my own foolishness, the feeling passed away."

"You's a better man 'n I is, Mas'er Latimer," the diver admitted. "Me, I jest done got plumb mad an' scared, clear through."

"Then you really felt something, Lat?" asked his father.

"Yes, Dad, I really did. I don't wonder that the chaps got scared. I was wobbly myself, just for a minute or two. But I shook it off, all right. Anyway, I went all over the hulk," and he proceeded to describe in detail the condition of the sunken vessel as he had found it. He finished by saying, "and it would be easy enough to break into the cabin, if a fellow had tools."

Then Latimer wheeled on the negro diver.

"Would you be afraid to come down again,

with me?" he asked, adding, laughingly, "I'll promise not to try to kill you, when we get down there! And you know, Cæsar," he continued, "I'm not very handy under the water. I couldn't handle tools, to save my life."

The diver shrank a little and his eyes blinked, but he answered sturdily enough.

"I don' make no promises about stayin' down," he said. "But ef yo're willin' to go down again, Mas'er Latimer, I'll go, too. Yes, sah, I done does my best to be game."

"You're the real stuff, Cæsar!" declared the boy; "it takes a whole lot more spunk to do something you're really afraid to do than it does not to be afraid."

The negro grinned appreciation, and motioned to the coxswain to close his helmet. Captain Voley performed the same task for Latimer. The force-pumps were set at work, and the two descended into the water.

Cæsar hung back a little to let Latimer go ahead. On arriving at the sunken vessel, Latimer put his hand on the hulk.

Again, but in less degree, the impulse of rage seized him. He held up the other hand to the negro, warning him back. Cæsar stopped dead,

and watched. In just a few seconds the feeling passed, and the boy beckoned Cæsar on.

As soon as the negro diver came close, Latimer stepped forward. Motioning him to rest the crowbar against the hulk he took Cæsar's hand and gestured to him to place his other hand against the side of the hulk.

The negro did so and, as his hand touched the wood, Latimer, watching his comrade's face closely, saw it suddenly distorted with rage.

The boy clenched tighter the hand he held.

Savagely, Cæsar tried to pull it away and free himself, but Latimer threw all the strength he possessed into that grip.

Then, slowly, after a period which was probably about two minutes, but which seemed to be as many hours, the boy saw the negro's face relax. Little by little the look of anger passed into a daze of bewilderment, and then, to his intense relief, Latimer saw the white teeth of the negro as Cæsar burst into a laugh, unheard, of course, through the copper diving-helmet.

The danger was over. Latimer let go the negro's hand, his own fingers cramped from the nervous tension of the grip.

Cæsar grinned again broadly to show that he was himself again, and picked up his crowbar.

With a quick turn of the valve, the expert inflated his dress, climbed on the wreck, adjusted his weight and walked aft on the wrecked hulk. Very different were his dexterous movements from those of Latimer! It was easy to see that the negro was quite at home at the bottom of the water.

The companion hatchway, which Latimer had thought would be so difficult to open, flew apart at the second or third wrench of the crowbar. The boy would have hesitated before descending the companion steps, for fear of fouling his air-tube, but Cæsar understood how to handle himself and went down without fear. Latimer longed to follow, but he knew that an inexpert diver can sometimes be a great hindrance, and he stayed on the hulk's deck.

He waited there fully five minutes before the great copper head appeared above the companionway. Cæsar came up to him and opened his hand.

It was full of pieces of gold!

Satisfied, both divers returned to the ocean floor, and ascended to the pumping boat.

"Yes, sah!" reported Cæsar, as soon as the window of the helmet was opened, "thar's sho' a lot o' money down thar. It ain't goin' to be so easy to git, though. It's all packed in the seat lockers. Thar may be more in the lazaret. Thar's some boxes in thar, an' they're sho' heavy! I could move 'em lively, though, sah, if Job'd come down."

But this the other diver would not do, in spite of the temptation of a larger share of the treasure. One of the other men of the crew volunteered, however, and, though he had not had as much experience, under Cæsar's direction he did his part well enough. A section of the deck was cut away and the boxes passed up. By evening at least thirty thousand dollars in gold and silver pieces and in roughly melted bars had been brought up, and next day the sum was almost doubled. It made a considerable fortune, in all, but Captain Jerry Voley divided it into three parts. One part he gave to Mark Hoveller, without whom the treasure would not have been found, one part was the share of the *Moray* and its owner, and the remaining third was divided among the crew, the larger part of this share going to those who had done the diving—Latimer

included—the rest in proportion to the ratings of the men.

By the second evening, the hulk had been thoroughly explored and emptied, the pumping boat was once more lashed behind the chart-house, the anchors were raised, and the *Moray* started back on her way to the Bahamas.

At supper, the "Admiral," who had taken no part in the salvage operations from the sunken hulk, suddenly turned and said abruptly:

"Son Jerry, how much do ye think the share o' the *Moray* 'll be?"

"It's hard to say exactly, Father," was the answer, "because it's sure that those rough lumps of gold are just a mixture of plate and jewelry melted down by the pirates, and not pure gold by any means. But there's probably about two thousand pounds ($10,000) anyway."

"An' that Hoveller fellow has as much?"

"Ay, Father."

"An' what were ye layin' to do wi' the money?"

The captain of the *Moray* glanced across at the old wrecker with an understanding look.

"You were thinking of the *St. Jago?*" he asked.

"Ay, Son Jerry, I was a-thinkin' of it."

"Two thousand pounds isn't much for a job of that sort," the captain of the *Moray* rejoined, thoughtfully.

"Four thousand is!"

"You mean we ought to get Mark Hoveller in on it?"

"If he wants to," pursued the "Admiral," "why not?"

Latimer leaned forward eagerly. This was one of his dreams. Ever and again he had heard his father and grandfather speak of trying to secure the treasure of the *St. Jago,* one of the sunken Spanish treasure galleons, the location of which had been handed down in the Voley family for generations.

"I'll put in my share!" he exclaimed.

Neither of the men paid any attention to him.

In response to a look of agreement in his son's face, the "Admiral" rose, put his head out of the cabin door, and roared:

"Send Mark Hoveller aft!"

There was never any need for the old wrecker to repeat an order. He could be heard half a mile away, for one thing, and, for another, his

voice had a ring of authority which no one ever disputed.

A minute later the sailor appeared, cap in hand.

"Come in, Hoveller," said the "Admiral," and pushed a glass of grog across the table.

"Thank ye, sir," said Mark, and tossed it off.

"We've been a-talkin' about ye, Hoveller," the old wrecker began. "Ye've got quite a pot o' money, leastways ye will have when we make an accountin' an' divide up. Ten thousand dollars ye'll have, maybe. What are ye goin' to do with it? Get drunk an' let the first hussy that ye meet take it all from ye?"

The sailor grinned sheepishly, and changed his weight from one foot to the other.

"I was layin' for a spell on shore, sir," he admitted.

"In Key West?"

"Ay, sir, that's what I was thinkin'."

"Ye've got no folks there?"

"No, sir, none at all."

"Ye jest want to go there to blow it in, eh? First thing ye know, ye'll be sand-bagged an' robbed, or else some slick-fingered gambler'll get yer pile. More likely yet, some keeper of a

sailors' boarding house'll put knockout drops in yer coffee an' ye'll be shanghaied an' that's the last ye'll ever see o' yer money!"

But at this the sailor protested.

"I'm not such a lubber as all that, sir!" he declared.

"Ay," growled the old wrecker, "ye're like all the rest o' yer crew. Ye think it's always fair weather in harbor. I never yet saw a man who was a good sailorman aboard ship who knew enough to watch out for squalls ashore."

The implied compliment flattered the sailor's vanity, as was intended, but he was determined to show his worldly wisdom. As the "Admiral" had shrewdly guessed, Mark had no plans beyond those of a somewhat sordid conception of a "good time." To excuse himself, he blurted out:

"I'd invest my money, sir."

The old wrecker screwed up a weather eye at the man.

"Ye never thought of it till this minute!" he stormed. "An' what'd ye invest in? Wall Street?"

"There's a-plenty makes money that way, sir," retorted Mark.

"An' in about three days ye'd be cleaned out alow an' aloft an' set adrift!"

"There's some honest brokers," declared Mark, anxious to defend his new-found plan.

"Ay, man, there's mild-mannered sharks, too, likely, but ye ain't never seen one. Nor has any one else. Did ye ever see a nice fat pig dropped into a bunch o' sharks, Hoveller? That's the way ye'll look after the Wall Street yellow-bellies get at ye!"

Mark began to look uneasy. The "Admiral's" sharp and caustic phrases brought him to a realization that he had actually no plans of his own with the money, and that nothing was more likely than that he would be robbed of it in some one or other of the ways suggested. He answered, yielding to the old man's lead:

"What ought I to do with it, sir?"

"All depends if ye want to waste it or to use it," the "Admiral" answered. "It isn't as if ye had so much. Ten thousand dollars ain't capital enough to live on, that's sure. It's about enough for a stake on somethin' bigger, an' that's all. Suppose ye could lay yer hands on half a million dollars, Hoveller, what then?"

The sailor's eyes glistened, and he took a step forward greedily.

The bait had taken!

"Heed me well, now, Hoveller," the old wrecker went on, "for I don't talk twice. I'm a-goin' to put a fair offer before ye. Ye can say 'yes' to what I have to say, or ye can say 'no' an' that'll be the last of it. But if ye've any sense in yer head, ye'll jump at the chance.

"I'll hand to ye, the day we land at Nassau, without waitin' for any court proceedin's about the treasure, one thousand dollars in cash, for spendin' money. If ye show yerself a fool an' lose it right away, that's your business. I'll put another thousand in the bank for ye, an' fix it so's ye can't draw more'n a hundred dollars at a time. The other eight thousand dollars ye'll put in with us.

"For generations there's been handed down in the Voley family a story tellin' where there lies the wreck of an ol' Spanish galleon, wi' nigh four million dollars in gold aboard her. We know whereabouts she lies, but it'll take weeks—maybe months—o' searchin' to find her. An' after she's found, it's goin' to be a tricky bit o' business,

gettin' the treasure. Only—the job's big enough to be worth tryin'!

"If ye want to go in with us, Hoveller, we'll put a valuation on the *Moray* an' on the capital we put in, an' ye shall get a share proportionate to the amount o' money ye put in. There's no sayin' how much we find, or if we find any. But, if we do find the galleon, what ye get out o' her yerself ought to be enough to keep ye the rest o' yer life."

"An' if I'm willin', sir," said Mark, cautiously, "what do I have to do on the search myself?"

"Ye'll come as quartermaster on the *Moray*," the "Admiral" replied. "Yer pay'll be reg'lar quartermaster's pay, to be taken out o' yer share o' the treasure, if we find any, an' to be jest wages, if we don't. There's an extra bunk in the assistant engineer's cabin, an' ye can sleep there. Ye'll mess with the engineers an' steward."

"Who'd be in charge o' this here expedition, sir?" the sailor asked.

"I would, myself," the "Admiral" responded.

Mark Hoveller nodded approval of this.

"An' yo'll take charge o' my money, yo'self, sir?"

"Certainly, if ye want me to."

"The name o' 'Admiral' Voley," declared Mark with decision, "is known for square dealin' from one end o' the West Indies to the other, an' better'n a bank. I ain't got none too much use for banks. Ay, sir," he continued, turning directly to the "Admiral," "if this expedition is yourn, an' yo'll take charge o' my money, I'm willin' to join, providin' I can get spendin' money freely whenever I like."

"Ye'll get what I told ye," the old wrecker answered shortly. "Those are the terms. Do ye sign on?"

"Ay, sir," came the definite response, "I'll sign on."

"Get out the articles, Son Jerry!" cried the old man, who never let a matter drag a moment longer than he could help. Five minutes later a brief agreement had been drawn up, and signed, and Mark Hoveller had signed articles as quartermaster on board the *Moray* for a period not to exceed one year.

"Now, Son Jerry," the "Admiral" said, leaning forward and mixing himself another glass of grog, "ye can tell him about the *St. Jago*. For all his superstitious notions, I've noticed Hoveller

can keep quiet when he likes. If he's goin' on shares, he ought to know."

The captain of the *Moray* nodded, refilled his pipe, and began:

"Do you know much about sunken treasure, Hoveller?" he asked. "Especially here, in the West Indies?"

"No, sir, not much," the sailor responded. "I did hear that, in the old days, there was a sight o' Spanish vessels went to the bottom, though."

"More than you'd think. You've no idea of the amount of money that is lying at the bottom of the sea. Let me give you some figures, Hoveller, and you'll open your eyes. Just listen to this:

"Figuring it all up together, during the last five hundred years there have been dug from the gold and silver mines of the world or taken from the hoards of ancient civilizations such as those of the Aztecs and Incas, about thirty billions of dollars' worth of treasure. The total value of all gold and silver coins, in all countries of the world, is about eleven billions, this including the bullion stored in various treasuries against the paper money issued. That leaves nineteen bil-

lions of dollars' worth of gold and silver to be accounted for.

"Now, it has been estimated that in gold and silver ornaments, jewelry, watch-cases, table-ware and the like, in all the countries of the world, about seven billion dollars' worth of fine metal is tied up. There is still buried treasure, kept as private hoards—mainly in Asia—amounting to another three billions. Temple and royal treasures make up for three billions more. Worn away or abraded by handling, both in coins and in various objects of gold and silver during the past five hundred years another four billions has been lost, and the remaining two billion dollars' worth of gold and silver lies at the bottom of the sea."

"Two billions of dollars, sir!" exclaimed Hoveller, for, even to him, the sum total was staggering.

"At least that. And, what is even more interesting to wreckers, a good half of this amount lies within less than a hundred fathoms of the surface, some of it in quite shallow water. Of this gold and silver, the larger part was sunk in the Spanish treasure ships, which, during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries

bore cargo after cargo of gold from Mexico and Peru.

"In general, Hoveller, those treasure fleets followed one of five routes, and most of the wrecks of the Spanish galleons are to be found along those routes or in places whither they were blown by bad weather from there. I've done quite a bit of studying on those routes, and the 'Admiral' and I have charted them out pretty exactly.

"The first route was from Panama to Santo Domingo and through Mona Passage out to the Atlantic. When, a little later, Havana became the Spanish capital, the plate-fleets went from Panama to Havana, and then coasted along the north of Cuba to the Old Bahama Channel and out to sea by the Silver Bank Passage. The Windward Passage, which is the best of all, they seldom used. The third route, from Venezuela, ran north of the chain of islands which lies along the Caribbean coast of South America and into the Atlantic, north of Trinidad. Some of the Peruvian treasure was sent through Magellan's Straits, or round Cape Horn and then across to the Canary Islands. The Portuguese took the route from Brazil to Sierra Leone.

"You may not know it, Hoveller, but, three centuries ago, Charles V of Spain sent a commission of Flemish engineers to survey the Isthmus of Panama to see if it were possible to cut a canal through. The engineers reported it as feasible, but their estimates of the cost were so high as to frighten the emperor off.

"This project was mainly for the purpose of stopping the terrible losses which the plate-fleets sustained, after rounding Cape Horn, from pirates and privateers. These pirate ships used the estuary of the River La Plata as their headquarters, and the plate-fleet which reached Spain without having seen the English or Dutch ensign on a privateer, or the black flag or Jolly Roger on a pirate craft, considered itself lucky.

"And now we come to the *St. Jago de Almazora.* She was a historic vessel, and her fate was tragic."

Captain Voley stopped a moment to make sure that his hearer was listening. He did not need. Mark Hoveller was following with the most intense absorption. The "Admiral" had well judged the man. The old wrecker had been shrewd enough to perceive that a seaman whose imagination was so easily stimulated by the

superstitions of the ocean, and whose memory was good enough to store them in his mind was exactly the kind of man who would be adventurous enough and romantic enough for treasure-hunting.

The captain of the *Moray* resumed.

"You've heard of Columbus, I know, Hoveller, because, the other day, I heard you talking about the 'Hand o' Satan Island,' and saying that the island was on the other side of the Atlantic before Columbus crossed. But do you know how many voyages Columbus made?"

"Two or three, I think, sir," the sailor answered, "but I'm not quite sure."

"He made four," corrected Captain Voley, "that is, four voyages across the Atlantic. On the first voyage he found the Bahama Islands, Haiti and the eastern part of Cuba, and sailed back to Spain, leaving a small colony on Haiti. On his second voyage he first made land at Dominica, sailed up the Leeward Islands to Porto Rico and thence to Haiti, to find every man slain in the colony he had left behind. He founded a town further east on the north coast of Haiti and then left on a journey of exploration along the southern coast of Cuba. When he

got back to Haiti he found that mutiny had broken out. He tried to straighten things out, but they went from bad to worse, the whole colony rose in revolt, and Columbus returned to Spain with his reputation badly shaken.

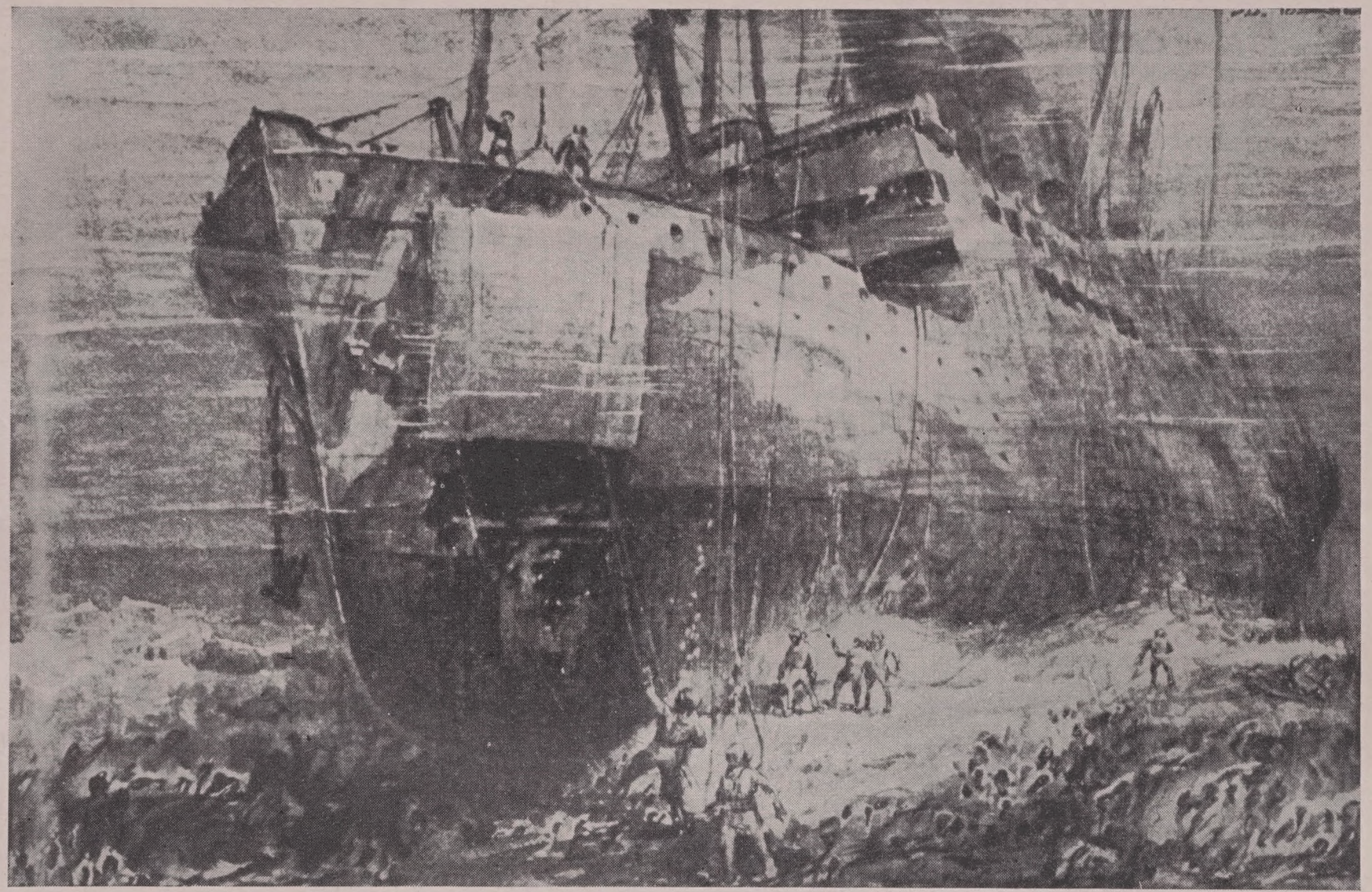
" It was nearly three years before he could get funds for a third voyage. This time he took a course too far south, got into the doldrums and he and all his crews nearly died from lack of water. At last the current brought him to Trinidad. Exploring the west coast of that island he discovered South America. Sailing north from there he reached Haiti again, only to find the island in a state of civil war. So many complaints were made that the King of Spain sent out a new governor, who, after a short investigation of the situation, arrested Columbus and sent him back to Spain in chains. The navigator was pardoned by the king and queen, but he was a disgraced man and all his titles and honors were taken from him.

" Once more he started out, but this time he had strict orders from the King of Spain not to touch on Haiti. There had been trouble enough there already. Columbus took the same course as on his second voyage, but, arriving near Haiti,

Courtesy of Engineering Magazine.

"SHE FIRED AT US! WE SANK HER! WE RAISED HER!"

The ex-Spanish cruiser, *Reina Mercedes*, raised from the depths where American shells sent her in the battle of Manila Bay.



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PATCHING THE GAPING WOUND.

Divers, under the sea, putting in place a huge plate to repair the hole made by a torpedo, a hole so big that an automobile could be driven through it. (From a painting by J. O. Todahl, reproduced by courtesy of the *Ladies' Home Journal.*

he found one of his smaller ships becoming unseaworthy. Remembering that he still had many friends in Haiti, he decided to land there, in spite of the royal prohibition, and to endeavor to secure another ship. Columbus arrived off Santo Domingo on July 1, 1502, and any hesitation that he might have felt about running into that harbor in defiance of the royal orders was overcome by the fact that he saw a storm was brewing."

Mark Hoveller nodded sagely.

"That's the hurricane season down there, sir," he remarked.

"Exactly. Now Bobadilla, the governor who had been sent out to replace Columbus, had treated the Indians with such atrocious cruelty and had made the conditions of the colony so terrible that there had been more complaints of him, even, than there had been of Columbus. So, between Columbus' third and fourth voyages, another governor, called Ovando, had been sent, who, when it came to cruelty, was, if anything, a shade worse than Bobadilla. Ovando had orders to send Bobadilla back, not exactly to stand trial, but to give an accounting of his governorship.

"Now listen closely to this, Hoveller. Spain, of course, wanted only one thing out of these discoveries, and that was gold. Columbus' voyages had been efforts to find a westward route to China and the Spice Islands for trade. Columbus hadn't found that route. The new colonies did not pay. That was the main reason of his disgrace. Bobadilla knew that his own fate would hang on the amount of treasure he could collect. So, for the two years of his governorship, he had committed the most horrible atrocities on the natives in order to collect every grain of gold that could be found in the country.

"When Ovando came, he realized that if Bobadilla returned to Spain with so much treasure, he might be reinstated and the new governor might lose his position. Several months were to elapse before the fleet went to Spain. Whereupon Ovando commenced even worse cruelties upon the natives than Bobadilla had done. Although the former governor had exacted a crushing tax, Ovando issued orders that every cacique or native headman should pay a further tribute and, if he failed to deliver it on a certain day, his right hand was to be cut off. Many could not pay and were mutilated in this fashion.

" One case especially caused a great stir and all but raised all the Indians of the island in revolt against the Spaniards. It would have done so, but the natives had been so cowed by the stern rule of Bobadilla that they dared not rise.

" One of the Arawak tribes was governed by a woman chief, named Ana-Caona, who was not only chieftainess, but also the priestess of the tribe. She had a daughter, a girl not quite fifteen years of age. Ovando, the new governor, demanded from Ana-Caona a very large tribute, for he had heard that gold mines existed in the territory of her tribe. The woman chief brought to Ovando all the gold she could secure, but it was a long way short of the tribute demanded. Whereupon the governor gave orders that the woman and girl should be first maltreated and then tortured, after which he hanged both the chieftainess and her child, so that they should not be able to testify against him nor to arouse the hostility of the Indians by accounts of how they had been treated.

"A woman who was washing for gold in the sand of a little stream in Ana-Caona's territory turned over with her rake a nugget weighing six

hundred ounces, the largest ever found in Haiti, and worth to-day over twelve thousand dollars. The Indian woman hurried with this nugget to the governor, but it was too late. Ana-Caona and her daughter had been hanged the day before! Ovando promptly put the Indian woman to death, so that she could not tell about the nugget and the crime.

"Such was the situation when Columbus, unexpectedly, put into the harbor of Santo Domingo. The fleet, carrying all the treasure which Bobadilla had gathered, and also that which Ovando had hurriedly secured during the few months of his governorship, was lying in the harbor of Santo Domingo, ready to sail. Ovando himself was at the port.

"No sooner did Columbus land than he was greeted with peremptory orders to leave the harbor immediately. Ovando was aware that Columbus had been forbidden by royal orders to set foot on Haiti, and the governor also realized that, for his own safety, the navigator must go. Columbus had many enemies in Santo Domingo, but he also had many friends. The once famous admiral and discoverer of the island was forbidden even to speak to any one on the street,

and ordered to get out of the harbor without an instant's delay, leaky ship and all.

"Columbus protested vigorously, declaring this to be inhuman treatment, since there was no other harbor or settlement in all those seas, and a tempest was brewing. Ovando, however, was relentless, and, knowing that he possessed the official authority to do so, threatened to turn the guns of the fleet on the small and sea-battered caravels of the great discoverer.

"Rendered helpless by the royal ban, Columbus returned to his vessels, raised his anchors and set sail. But, before he cleared the harbor, seamanship overcame resentment, and he sent a boat back to the governor, beseeching him to keep the treasure fleet in harbor for at least a week longer, for he alone had experience in those seas, and knew that evil weather threatened. The warning was disregarded.

"Columbus, convinced that the storm was approaching—although the sky and sea showed few outward signs visible to a landsman's eye—sought for some kind of a haven. Fifty miles further west, along the coast, he found the little bay of Azua, into which he sailed two days later. There he put out every anchor and snugged his

ships down as much as possible, in preparation for the storm he expected.

"That same day the treasure fleet, twenty-eight vessels in all, among them the *St. Jago de Almazora*, set sail for Spain. They had not been out of the harbor thirty-six hours when a West Indian hurricane of the most violent type burst upon them with full force, sinking twenty out of the twenty-eight vessels of the fleet, among the ill-fated ships being those which had contained the treasure. Bobadilla, the plundering governor, was drowned also. Only one of the galleons reached Spain.

"The total amount of gold, silver and pearls on board all the ships of the fleet, according to the old records of Santo Domingo, was two hundred thousand castellanos—equal to at least seven hundred and fifty million dollars to-day—most of which now lies on the reefs west of Silver Bank, or on the shoals and banks that fringe the north coast of Haiti and the dangerous waters between Turks and Caicos Islands.

"But, to come to the actual point of our project, Hoveller, you ought to be told that the treasure of Ovando, that treasure which cost such abominable cruelty to gather, that treasure which

included the six-thousand-ounce nugget of Ana-Caona, was in the coffers of the *St. Jago de Almazora.*"

He paused a moment, and added impressively: "And we know where the *St. Jago* lies!"

CHAPTER VIII

MASTERLESS GOLD

DURING the period of preparation for the search of the *St. Jago,* Latimer pestered his father so continually about questions of treasure and treasure-hunting that one afternoon the captain of the *Moray* took the boy to the attic of the coral-built house on Biminis, unlocked an old chest and threw back the lid. The box was packed to the brim with old volumes, on the top of which lay a small bundle of manuscript.

"There!" he said. "Read your fill! I've kept these books away from you, Lat, because I didn't want you to get the treasure-hunting idea too young. That's only an incident in salvage, remember! But, since we have decided to go in search of the *St. Jago,* there's no harm in your learning all you can about the Spanish treasure ships."

"And have you read all these books, Dad?" queried the boy, surprised, for he had never

tapped this vein in his strictly practical father before.

The captain of the *Moray* smiled grimly, as though he guessed the thought that was passing in the boy's mind.

"Yes," he said, "I've read all these and a lot more. I was just wild to go treasure-hunting when I was your age, Lat, and used to think that your grandfather was just wasting his time because he did not start that very day to find some Spanish galleon that was lying on a shoal, waiting for us to come and fill our pockets with the shining pieces. I can remember the time when it seemed to me that I could see the *St. Jago* right out there, on the reefs in front of our door! As a lad of nine or ten years old, I used to have day-dreams of swimming into the sea and coming back to the house a few hours later with my waist-handkerchief full of pieces of eight and Spanish doubloons."

"And yet you never tried, Dad?"

"Never, Lat. The Voley name is so well known in wrecking circles that we were seldom idle. As I got older, little by little, I took over a large share of Father's work. Then I saw that times were changing and that modern salvage

was superseding old-time wrecking. Father either couldn't or wouldn't see it, but stuck to the old ways.

"Over and over again I got disgusted with the trickery and semi-piracy around me, and I couldn't tell you how many times I determined to leave the Bahamas and go somewhere else to start into modern ways for myself. Then, just after some wreck had happened which seemed wrong and queer, the 'Admiral' would do some heroic or gallant rescue that no other man on the island would have dared attempt, and my old respect and admiration would come back. And, the older I grow, the more I compare his big-heartedness and dauntless courage with the commercial ideas of to-day, and I wish that I were more like him.

"Then came one or two lucky hauls, especially the bringing in of the derelict *Glen Lothian*—I'll tell you about her some day—which gave me the chance to buy the *Moray*. She'd been built for an ocean-going tug, but her frame was too heavy for her engines. Little by little I've practically rebuilt her, put in two modern turbine engines, and equipped her so that she's the most powerful wrecking tug on the Bahamas, or, for that

matter, anywhere between Norfolk and Galveston.

"Ever since then I've been so busy handling straight salvage work that I'd dropped all idea of treasure-hunting. I don't believe I'd ever have taken it up again, if Mark Hoveller hadn't brought that story of Captain Lincoln to Father."

"Yet you went into that quickly enough!" the boy remarked.

"It was only a chance shot," Captain Jerry answered. "If we found nothing, it only meant the loss of a day or two, and I hadn't any intention of spending much time there. It was Father who was bent on going. I wouldn't have bothered about that Lincoln story at all, if Hoveller had showed it first to me."

"I wonder why Grap jumped at it so?"

"He knew the reefs down there. He'd had a wreck or two somewhere in those waters in the sixties or seventies, and, as you know, Lat, your grandfather never forgets the lie of a shoal or a reef. He can quote you the soundings and the bearings of mighty near every rock or bar between North Biminis and Silver Bank, and a heap further, too. You saw yourself how he

took the *Moray* up to Ghost Island, near enough to the actual spot for us to be able to find the sunken hulk in a few hours.

"Then the depth in which she was reported to lie made it seem so easy both to find and to salvage. That was one thing the pirates were not likely to have made a mistake about. They were first-class sailormen, as a rule, those old pirates. They had to be! And there's not much chance for going wrong with a lead-line in smooth water.

"To tell you the truth, though, Lat," the salver continued, "I was surprised that we got as rich a haul as we did."

"Were you, Dad?" exclaimed Latimer, surprised. "I expected ten times as much!"

His father smiled.

"That's poor judgment on your part, Lat," he said. "Think for a minute! We found six thousand pounds. The Lincoln story said that there were at least four of the pirates who knew about the treasure, and probably a couple more. That would only divide up to a thousand pounds or five thousand dollars apiece, hardly more than a few months' spending money for a gang like that. It would be a long way short of the sum necessary for a pirate to give up the sea and live

on, and that was what these gentry were always striving for. If there had been ten times as much, the way you say, the pirates would have taken their winnings and retired.

"Modern pirates have to be content with small gains. It isn't like the days when the Spanish plate-fleets were on the water, and one prize would mean a fortune for every man of the pirate crew.

"Money nowadays is sent overseas in fast and powerful steamships. What chance would a pirate schooner have against such a craft, especially when equipped with wireless? They couldn't overhaul her, in the first place; nor seize her, in the second; nor run her engines and navigate her, in the third; and the wireless would summon revenue cutters and light cruisers from a dozen ports, so that escape would be impossible. The only place where pirates can operate nowadays is in the China Seas, and they take good care to let steamships alone.

"No, Lat, the only hope for treasure now is to fish it up from the bottom of the sea. And West Indian waters are the best hunting-ground of all. If you dig into those books, Son, you'll find some amazing stories."

He leaned down and picked out the little pile of manuscript, written in a round boyish handwriting.

"Read that!" he said. "I wrote it when I was about your age. Most of it I copied out of an old book, and added bits of information which I picked out here and there from some of the old volumes in that chest. It isn't a full list, not by a long shot, but it will give you an idea how thick these reefs are strewed with treasure."

He handed the manuscript to the lad, and turned to go.

"Don't imagine, though," he added, halting at the head of the attic ladder, "that treasure-hunting is easy. It isn't! It's a risky speculation at best. And, even after you've found a sunken wreck, it doesn't follow that you get anything out of it. If the gold were easy to find and to raise, it wouldn't have stayed there all these years!"

"No," admitted Latimer, "I can see that. Thanks ever so much, Dad!" he called.

Then, perching himself on a corner of the chest, he turned to the first page of his father's manuscript, and began to read:

"When, in the sixteenth century, Spain dis-

covered gold in America, all Europe scented the prey and was moved with an unlawful desire to share it. These yearnings and the depredations that followed led to the organization of the flota, a convoyed fleet of plate-ships, and to the establishment of haberia, a sort of insurance tax. The flota was dispatched every six months alternately from Mexico and Peru to the port of San Lucar, near Cadiz. Such fleets contained as many as seventy-five or even a hundred vessels, convoyed by Spanish ships of war.

"It was difficult for pirates to attack such a fleet, for the sailing pace was kept so slow as to allow laggards to keep up. If, during a storm, a vessel proved unseaworthy, she was scuttled and abandoned and the cargo and crew transferred to other ships of the fleet. Even so, daring raids were made by swift-sailing armed privateers.

"The Spanish precaution was excellent, but it was destined to be defeated. Designs upon the plate-fleets assumed a more systematic and formidable character. Quarrels were fixed upon Spain on any pretext, even the most trivial. War was declared against her, and privateers were dispatched from almost every port in Europe to

snatch from her a portion of the coveted wealth which she was wresting so rapidly and so cruelly from America.

"Sea-rovers, either with or without government pennants, sailed from England, Holland and France, both in times of war and times of peace. These vessels, swift, heavily armed and carrying enormous crews of semi-piratic desperadoes, intercepted the Spanish galleons on their way to join the convoy, sacked the towns of New Spain, looted the bullion depositories, and—to their discredit be it told—did not scruple to torture the Spanish officials to make them disgorge their personal treasure. Such treatment was regarded as fair reprisal, for the Spanish had long before set the fashion of torturing all sea-rovers as 'pyrats and hereticks.'

"The coasts of New Granada were ravaged by privateers in 1572; half a dozen towns in Mexico were burned, their inhabitants put to the sword, and every speck of valuables seized in 1576, the famous capture of Nombre de Dios by Drake being especially notable. No less than seventeen privateer vessels harried the coasts of Peru and Chile in 1577. The town of Cartagena, Spain, was sacked by an English fleet un-

der Drake in 1585, just at the time that a Spanish plate-fleet had arrived and many of the vessels were still unloaded. Enormous booty was taken by a combined privateer fleet in an attack on Santo Domingo in 1586, and this wholesale destruction and spoliation of the Spaniards was capped by the defeat of the Spanish Armada in the English Channel and the subsequent scattering and sinking of that famous fleet by a terrible storm.

"During the twenty years, 1567–1587, the privateers actually seized 7,000,000 gold ducats, equal to about $70,000,000 in plunder, and sent to the bottom of the sea Spanish vessels containing fully three times as much treasure. Of the more than $200,000,000 lost on the shores of America, Africa or Europe during the sixteenth century, not more than $10,000,000 has been recovered.

"The seventeenth century saw not only the pirates and the privateers at work, but also the buccaneers, a curiously organized system of freebooting on the sea, which rose, for a while, to the dignity of a sea-empire and was tacitly recognized by the maritime nations, though in defiance of international law. Oftentimes these buc-

caneers acted in coöperation with naval fleets, but still more frequently they worked alone.

"Vera Cruz was plundered in 1608, St. Thomas and other settlements on the Orinoco in 1617, and Matanzas in 1628—with a booty of 11,600,000 guilders (about $49,000,000). Maracaibo fell into the hands of the buccaneers with $24,000,000 in 1666, Porto Bello four years later, St. Catherine in 1671. In that same year Panama—with a booty so immense that it has never been estimated—was taken by the notorious buccaneer-governor, Sir Henry Morgan. In 1683 Vera Cruz was again captured, $1,000,000 was paid in hard cash for ransoms, $9,000,000 was taken in plunder and 1,500 slaves were seized. Campeachy fell in 1685 and Cartagena, with $8,000,000 in silver, in 1697.

"During the buccaneer century the buccaneers, privateers and pirates amassed close to another $200,000,000. Little of this reached Europe. It was spent lavishly in such places as the Tortugas and Port Royal, and it is estimated that at least one-fifth of it was buried in various places by buccaneers who died of wounds and diseases before they ever again had an opportunity to dig up their cached hoards.

"A list of the ships sunk during these two centuries with treasure aboard would be enormous. A few of the better known wrecks may be named.

"Twenty years after the destruction of the treasure fleet which sailed from the harbor of Santo Domingo, in spite of Columbus' warning, a vessel sailed from Vera Cruz with a cargo of gold bars, the wardrobe of the slain Aztec Emperor, Montezuma, and chests upon chests of jewels and precious stones, including what was declared to be 'the finest collection of huge pearls upon which the eye of man has ever fallen.' These were shipped by Cortés as the crowning evidence of his triumphant conquest. The galleon, however, was captured off the coast of Spain by a French corsair, the *Jean Florin,* which, pursued by Spanish war vessels, ran into the nest of small islands which lie between Quiberon and Le Croisic, at the north of the Bay of Biscay, but was herself impaled on the rocks to which she had tried to decoy her pursuers.

"In 1586 Sir Francis Drake attacked the Spanish plate-fleet off the Cape Verde Islands, captured five of the galleons and sank eleven. Treasure from one of these ships has been re-

covered, amounting to $750,000, but the other ten have not yet been found.

"On June 18, 1589, George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, known as 'the prince of pirates,' captured a Spanish galleon off San Juan de Ulloa and sent her home to Plymouth with a prize crew. By some treachery the galleon was wrecked off Land's End, and the loot was never recovered.

"In 1592 Sir John Burrough captured the Spanish treasure ship *Madre de Dios,* off the Azores, with $800,000 of treasure aboard her, but her consort, even more richly laden, was sunk. There are the wrecks of seventeen Spanish plate-ships around the Azores.

"In 1597, the Earl of Essex, acting as admiral of a fleet of 120 ships, in which fleet Lord Thomas Howard and Sir Walter Raleigh were vice-admirals, scoured the Gulf of Mexico. They captured thirty-one Spanish vessels and drove many others (twenty according to one record, forty-three according to another) to shipwreck on the West Indian and South American shores of the Caribbean.

"In the same year the Spanish galleon *Margarita,* with $6,500,000 in gold, trying to escape

from outlying ships of the Earl of Essex's fleet, was driven ashore on a reef near Porto Rico. She lies in comparatively shallow water. The wreck was discovered in 1898 by a party of students from Hartford, but the treasure-seekers were inexperienced, lacked sufficient capital to carry through their discoveries, and the gold lies there still.

"Up to this time the greater part of the privateering—which came close to piracy—had been done by the English. When, however, Holland threw off the clutch of Spain, the Dutch proceeded to secure vengeance for the terrible sufferings which they had been compelled to endure under the Duke of Alva and the familiars of the Inquisition. What Drake had been to the Spanish during the sixteenth century, Admiral Peter Hein was in the early part of the seventeenth century. He was put in charge of the Dutch Atlantic fleet in the spring of 1623 and he started out vigorously.

"In the summer of 1623, after lying in wait for some months near the Atlantic passage to Cape Horn, he encountered the Spanish plate-fleet, numbering more than fifty vessels. He had only nineteen small ships under his command. A

consummate seaman, instead of giving battle at once, Hein manœuvred until he got the weather gage of the enemy, and, operating mainly at night, harried the stragglers, little by little edging them in closer and closer to the treacherous coast. Then, with the wind in his favor, he suddenly opened a furious attack. The Spanish ships, caught in shoal water and on a lee shore, could not cluster to bring all their guns to bear. Hein sank three galleons in deep water, captured eleven and forced most of the rest ashore. The amount of booty secured is not known, nor is there any record as to what happened to the remaining few ships of the plate-fleet. Probably the buccaneers got them. It is known, however, that not a vessel reached Spain, and their cargoes must still be in the deep.

"Five years later, on September 8, 1628, Hein, who had been waiting for the West Indies plate-fleet, discovered the Spanish flota between Key West and Havana. He tried to force the heavy vessels on the fatal reef barrier of the Anquila Islands which runs from Dog Rocks to the southern end of Salt Cay Bank, and the Spanish admiral, not daring to risk the narrow and rock-obstructed Nicholas Channel with the

Dutch wasps stinging at his heels, ran into Matanzas Bay.

"Hein, whose fleet now numbered thirty-nine vessels, and who did not lack for courage, waited until morning and then sailed boldly into the bay after the powerful fleet. As happened so often in the warfare of those days, the small vessels outfought the larger, and, before evening, Hein was master of the whole plate-fleet. In actual plunder he obtained more than 11,600,000 florins, worth to-day nearly $30,000,000. Most of the gold, however, had been dropped overboard by the Spanish during the night, for the original lading showed $110,000,000 aboard. About $80,000,000 in gold, therefore, lies at the bottom of Matanzas Bay, in a depth of from fifteen to twenty fathoms.

"An even more famous case was the wreck of a Spanish treasure-ship lost on 'The Boilers' (reefs lying between Turks Island and the Tortugas), north of Haiti. This treasure was discovered by the son of a Maine blacksmith, who rose to become the first royal governor of Massachusetts.

"William Phips was born in Pemaquid, Maine, in 1651. He was one of a family of

twenty-six children, twenty of whom were boys. By turns he was a shepherd, farmer, and ships' carpenter's apprentice. He learned to read and write while he was learning his trade. He married a colonist's daughter with a little property and established himself in a shipyard on the Sheepscot River, in Maine. From this he was driven out by Indian warfare. It was while he had charge of this shipyard, however, that he heard from a buccaneer who had brought his vessel to the yard for repairs, about the Spanish plate-ship on 'The Boilers.'

"With prompt resolution, Phips went to London, and was successful in getting an audience from James II, who was always very partial to sailors. Phips' story was so circumstantial that the King agreed to help in the quest, and gave him command of the *Rose Alger,* a frigate of eighteen guns. The voyage was an unhappy one. Phips was an excellent ship-builder, but he was not a competent navigator, and his manners were so rough as to alienate the ship's officers. Storms were continuous, and, once in the neighborhood of the dangerous Bahaman shoals and reefs, the men mutined. The mutiny was fomented by the ship's officers, who de-

clared—not without reason—that Phips' recklessness and ignorance were apt to send the frigate to the bottom at any minute. The mutineers rushed aft in a body to seize their commander, but Phips stretched the ringleader dead with a single blow of his fist. The rest of the mutineers he cowed single-handed. The wreck could not be found, however, and with a bad grace, Phips returned to England.

"There was a compelling character in his personality, however, which won him confidence. The Duke of Albemarle, son of General Monk, subscribed funds for a second expedition. Bad weather again pursued the treasure-seekers, and though the details which had been given Phips by the buccaneer were precise, many days of weary sounding of the depths proved fruitless. At last even Phips despaired and prepared to go.

"Examining the bottom through a water-glass, for the last time, he saw growing beneath him, a wonderful example of a sea-pen (a form of coral-colony which grows like an enormous living feather) and bade a diver go down for it as a specimen. The diver descended and found himself on the deck of a ship.

"It was the lost galleon!

"A gun was the first booty hauled to the surface, and then a bar of silver. The wreck was at a depth of eight fathoms, a difficult task for the divers of the seventeenth century. None the less, $1,500,000 in gold and silver was recovered from the sunken galleon, every penny of which Phips brought to London, and in the dividing of which he showed the most scrupulous honesty, a rare thing in those days, when treasure-finders universally tried to cheat the Crown, the backers and the crew. The doughty adventurer was knighted, was awarded $80,000 as his share and received the appointment of sheriff of New England.

"In 1689, returning to his native land, he found Massachusetts in the hands of a revolutionary government, and in dire financial straits, for the colony could not redeem some paper money it had issued. Phips generously advanced money out of his own private purse. He returned to England to plead for changes in the charter of the colony, succeeded, and was appointed the first royal governor of Massachusetts. He made an efficient and hard-working official, but his rough sea-manners were intolerable, and he was superstitious enough to let the

Salem witchcraft mania continue. He made so many enemies that he was recalled to London, where he died, awaiting trial.

"Sir Henry Morgan, indeed, was made governor of Jamaica because of his success as a pirate, but Sir William Phips is the only character in history who achieved a governorship because of finding sunken treasure.

"It is probable that, had Phips not become governor, he would have started on another treasure hunt, for there is a letter left by him in which he expresses a wish to go on a search off the Isle of Teneriffe, one of the Canary Islands, where some $80,000,000 lies buried.

"In the year 1656, Admiral Blake, who had led the English fleets against the Dutch with varying success, had the temerity to attack the strong Spanish port of Cadiz, the Spanish headquarters of the plate-fleet. He sailed into the harbor, brought out one galleon as a prize—finding $2,000,000 aboard her—and sank a number of other vessels. Spanish divers, however, have secured about $8,000,000 of the treasure sunk in the harbor.

"The following year, Blake, though desperately ill, dared an even more desperate venture.

Learning that the Spanish plate-fleet, on her way home, had anchored in the bay of Santa Cruz, in the Island of Teneriffe, under the protection of a castle and five forts, Blake determined to sail in boldly. He might never get out alive, but if the Spanish plate-fleet could be sunk two years in succession it would cripple Spanish finances sorely.

"The wind was blowing fair into the harbor, and the British ships sailed in. The castle, the forts and the Spanish warships opened on the English vessels with a storm of shot and shell. In a few minutes, two of Blake's ships were on fire. But, even on the burning ships, the man-o'-war's-men worked their guns to the last, and, when their ships sank under them, swam to other vessels of the fleet, clambered aboard, and set to work again. So deadly was the marksmanship of the British ships and so poor that of the forts —the Spanish vessels gave a better account of themselves—that, before the engagement had continued an hour, all but three of the Spanish galleons were sunk or sinking. At this juncture there came a sudden shift of wind, and Blake, seizing the opportunity, set sail and sallied forth from the harbor, leaving behind him nothing of

the Spanish plate-fleet but charred or sunken hulks. His own loss was but four vessels. There still lies, in the depths of the harbor of Santa Cruz, in Teneriffe, gold and silver variously estimated at between $80,000,000 and $120,000,000.

"The last engagement of the seventeenth century in which treasure-ships were destroyed was in 1697, when a combined squadron of English and Dutch ships attacked the buccaneer fleet in Bahaman waters and sank a number of small vessels, the combined treasure of which is placed at $1,250,000.

"While the Peace of Ryswick, in 1697, which saw the end of the war which various maritime nations had waged against France, also ended the empire of the buccaneers, it did not put a stop to privateering. As long as Spain was taking gold from her colonies in America, so long did the English especially, and the Dutch to a less degree, covet that gold and stop at no means to secure it. England had maintained a Spanish alliance, as long as she needed it to attack France. Now that peace with France was secured, English and Dutch privateers promptly proceeded to harry Spain anew.

"In 1702, Sir George Rooke, commanding a

combined fleet of English and Dutch ships, was sent to intercept the Spanish plate-fleet on its way from Havana to Cadiz. Rooke received confidential information that the course of the fleet had been altered to Vigo, south of Cape Finisterre. Leaving the Dutch admiral, his ally, in ignorance of this plan, Rooke slipped away and stood for Vigo.

"The flota consisted of thirty treasure galleons, with $60,000,000 in gold and silver, and an unusually large amount of merchandise, the whole convoyed by Spanish and French war-vessels. Rooke waited for a favoring wind, and then sent into the harbor a fleet of fire-ships, fully ablaze and loaded with combustibles. Seven of the galleons had already been unloaded and the men were at work on the others, when the fire-ships appeared. In the confusion caused by the fire-ships, Rooke sailed in, destroyed every one of the ships of war and sank seventeen of the galleons. Six galleons were captured, the treasure on board amounting to $13,000,000 in silver. The gold had already been landed. The remainder of the treasure, amounting to about $30,000,000, mainly in silver, lies at the bottom of Vigo Bay.

" Several attempts have been made to recover this treasure. In 1883 a San Francisco company uncovered the *Almirante,* but they failed to find the treasure. In 1899, a French company worked on the same wreck, with a reported lack of success. (As Alexander Del Mar, an authority on the subject, remarks: ' Reports of unsuccess in treasure expeditions must not always be believed too freely.')

" There is a great deal of treasure awaiting the successful hunter and diver in the Bay of Campeachy, on the west coast of Yucatan. When sacked for the third time by the buccaneers in 1685, the captors brought into that port a richly laden Spanish galleon, but their prize profited them nothing, for the Spanish crew scuttled her and she sank into the bay, at a depth of fifty fathoms.

"An interesting attempt to recover this was made by an American company. In 1886, a so-called ' steam submarine vessel ' was invented and built in Boston. She sailed April 24, 1886, for the Bay of Campeachy, where an effort was to be made to secure the treasure. The boat failed to produce the expected results, and the expedition came to nought.

"But privateering was not done with, yet. In 1798, the British privateer barque, *De Brask,* cruising in the Spanish Main, captured two Spanish vessels richly laden with gold and silver. Making her way to England, the *De Brask* came up past Key West and the Florida Straits, hugging the American coast to run north of the trade winds. Off Cape Hatteras a violent blow came on, and the *De Brask* and one of her prizes in tow, the *La Plata,* foundered near the Capes of the Delaware, after a gallant effort to weather the storm. The actual amount of the treasure so lost is not known. It has been estimated at from ten to forty millions of dollars. The wreck is said to lie in nine fathoms of water and five different attempts have been made to secure it. In 1887, the *William P. Orr,* a wrecking schooner, with a steam tug, experienced divers and modern equipment, made the attempt. That some treasure was recovered is known, but an official accounting was never given out and it is believed that the profits were small.

"More recently, in the nineteenth century, the Spanish vessel *San Pedro de Alcantara* was blown up in the Margarita Channel, between the islands of Cubagua and Coche, near Caracas,

Venezuela. The vessel carried known treasure to the amount of $32,000,000 in gold doubloons and other treasure listed at $67,000,000 in all. Three attempts at recovery have been made: one by a Baltimore company, one by the Venezuelan Government, and one in 1877 by a New York company financed by Jacob Lorillard. The current runs strong in Margarita Channel, however, and all three efforts were without success.

" Nor is it to be thought that wrecks lie always at distant and little-travelled points. In the East River, New York, not a hundred yards from shore, within sight of the bridges that span that stream and over which trolley cars roar continually, lies the *Hussar,* a British man-o'-war, which was the paymaster's vessel of the British navy during the American War of Independence. She had nearly $5,000,000 in British gold aboard.

"All the foregoing makes no mention of the products of the gold-mines of Brazil, from which the doubloons, joes and demi-joes were coined, and which yielded the treasures of the Portuguese fleets. The output of these mines, during the middle decades of the eighteenth century, was over $18,000,000 per year. The total product from 1670 to 1870 was approximately $1,100,-

000,000. Of this sum, something under one-fourth never reached Portugal.

"With the discovery of gold in California by the 49'ers, the losses of treasure began again. The first of these was the wreck of the steamship *Central America,* lost off Cape Hatteras, with $2,400,000 in gold dust and nuggets. In 1862 the American steamer *Golden Gate* was wrecked on the shores of Costa Rica with $1,500,000 in gold. The wreck is in shallow water, but where a heavy surf rolls continually. The American ship *Phantom* went down with $10,000,000 of California gold in 1862. The following year a Hamburg barque, *George Sand,* bound out from San Francisco, was wrecked in the China Sea with $13,000,000 in nuggets and gold dust. Soon after, the losses stopped, for, with the building of the transcontinental railroads, shipments of bullion from San Francisco by water ceased. Between 1849 and 1869, however, the total loss in California gold in wrecked vessels was well over $60,000,000.

"Nor have the Australian gold mines failed to enrich the all-devouring maw of the sea. The first great treasure cargo from the gold mines of Australia was on the *Madagascar,* which left

Melbourne in 1856 and was never heard of again. Her store of $3,000,000 is irrecoverable. Three years later, the *Royal Charter,* with $4,000,000 in nuggets and dust, was wrecked on the coast of Wales within a day of her home port, and not only was all the treasure lost, but most of the passengers and crew. In 1866, the ship *General Grant* went down off the Auckland Islands with $15,000,000 in Australian gold. The list could be indefinitely extended. The total amount is even larger than the loss of California gold, and is estimated at $75,000,000.

"Losses from the South African gold fields have been less numerous, for the South Atlantic is freer for navigation and both winds and currents are favorable. Yet some $30,000,000 of South African gold, also, lies at the bottom of the sea. Practically none of this will ever be found again.

"Such are a few of the items of masterless gold in the ocean depths, enough to make multi-millionaires of scores upon scores of men. And these figures do not even take into account the hundreds of vessels in whose coffers were stored smaller sums of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

"Nor is this yet all. Were it possible, by

modern wrecking methods, to raise the vessels which lie within the hundred-fathom mark, the vast sums mentioned might be multiplied tenfold. It has been said that never a day passes upon the sea but that some ship is wrecked—whether it be an ocean giant such as the *Titanic* or an overloaded Chinese junk with mat-sails. In the century 1820–1920 (including both naval and mercantile vessels), the losses in shipping are placed at fifteen billions of dollars ($15,000,000,000), or almost as much as the Treasury of the United States has expended for all purposes during its entire history.

"The high-powered steamship has replaced the sailing-ship of earlier days, but in Lloyds' and other great maritime insurance centres of the world, there still is posted a portentous list of ships under the gruesome word:

"'Missing!'

"Adventure and peril are not yet past, and many a ship never reaches her home port. What has happened, no one can say. The sea guards her secrets."

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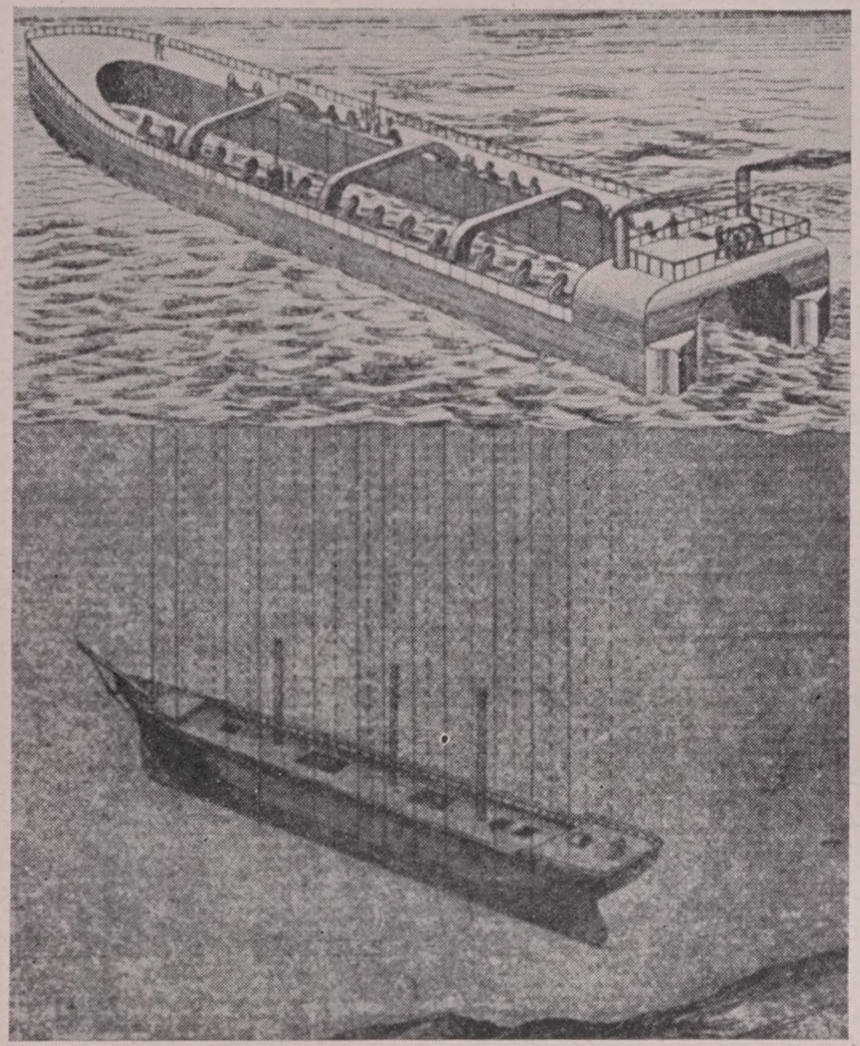
RAISING A TORPEDOED LINER.

Great pontoons, aided by rising tides, lift victim of ruthless submarine warfare from the sea-bottom.
(From a painting by J. O. Todhal, reproduced by courtesy of the *Ladies' Home Journal*.)



Courtesy of Technical World Magazine.

A Straight Lift.

In smooth and shallow water, this winch-vessel can raise a small wreck quickly.

Resurrected.

Though still keel upwards, the sunken ship rises to the surface after patching and pumping out.

CHAPTER IX

THE SCUTTLED SHIP

THE expedition for the recovery of the treasure of the *St. Jago de Almazora* was organized on a very different scale from that of the brief run to Ghost Island on the chance of finding the pirates' hulk. The *Rose* and the *Molly Day,* two of the staunchest schooners of the Black Fleet, chosen by the "Admiral," and with every man on board picked personally by the old wrecker, accompanied the *Moray.* Twelve divers were aboard, with Cæsar acting as Master Diver. Except for the three Voleys, Mark Hoveller and the engineers of the tug, every man on board the three vessels was a Bahaman negro. The old wrecker was a firm believer in their seamanship and loyalty.

The information which had been handed down in the Voley family, with regard to the location of the *St. Jago,* was as definite as information several centuries old could be, which was not saying much. Moreover, the story had come down

through the lips of natives, and this added a further uncertainty.

On their first night out, the "Admiral" told the story of the loss of the *St. Jago* to Latimer, partly to please the boy and partly to reconstruct the situation in his own mind more clearly.

"As ye'll see, Lat," he said, "there's more'n a bit o' guesswork in findin' her. We've decided, Son Jerry an' I, not to spend one penny more'n we got out o' the pirates, on this search. Then, if we find nothin', we're no richer an' no poorer'n we were before we started off for Ghost Island.

"The yarn o' the *St. Jago* is something like this:

"Ye remember, Son Jerry told Hoveller the story o' the treasure fleet which sailed out o' Santo Domingo, on July 3, 1502, defyin' the warnin' which Columbus had given. The fleet went out o' Mona Passage an' ran a bit to the west'ard to pick up a couple o' galleons comin' from Isabella, the first port started by Columbus on the north side o' Haiti. The galleons might ha' got clear out to sea, but for that delay.

"Then come the hurricane, an' ye know, Lat, how high at the bow an' stern were those old Spanish galleons. Their leeway in a blow must

ha' been big! What's more, they were too clumsy to lie close to the wind, an' that was one reason why the privateers an' buccaneers—most o' them usin' ships with a low freeboard, Dutch or English built—were always able to get the weather gage o' them.

"Now, the *St. Jago* was one o' the bigger ships an' her captain was standin' well out to sea when the blow hit her. He saw one after another of his consort galleons turn turtle, or have their masts blown out o' them an' go driftin' towards the reefs, the hurricane an' the current bearin' 'em along like flotsam. He wasn't carin' much for the lives o' his men, wasn't the cap'n o' the *St. Jago,* but he had a lot o' treasure aboard, an' he figured that if he could beach his ship, there was a chance o' recoverin' some o' the treasure afterwards. Leastways, it looks that way, judgin' from what he did.

"Runnin' up to a sandy island, near by, he finds himself up against a bar, with heavy surf a-rollin' over it. Findin' the water shoalin' fast, he drops his hook, but the cable snaps like a piece o' rope-yarn. He strikes the bar, goes over it without much damage, an' drops the other anchor. There's a lee shore, ugly-lookin', a cable's

length to leeward. He knows, if the *St. Jago* hits that, she'll pound to pieces, so he sends a couple o' men he can trust down into the hold to scuttle the ship, figurin' that way, there's a chance o' savin' something when the sea calms down.

"From the yarn—the way it's come down to us—just the officers an' some picked men o' the boats' crews were in the secret, an' these, at a given signal, gets out the galleon's boats, scrambles aboard 'em an' makes for the shore. The surf's runnin' pretty high, but, spite o' the hurricane, they lands safely, the boats bein' badly smashed up, but not beyond repair. They've plenty o' provisions an' water, for the boat had been got ready in time, an' they rig up a sail as some sort of a windbreak an' wait for the gale to die down.

"The eye o' the hurricane finds 'em there, an' the Spanish cap'n, knowing that in an hour or two she's a-goin' to blow worse'n ever, tells his men to bury the water an' the provisions in the sand, so's they won't get blown or washed away, an' puts out double guy-ropes to the windbreak, hitchin' the guy-ropes to sand anchors."

"That was pretty seamanship all round, Grap," commented Latimer.

"Ay, Son, the Spanish were good sailormen in those days. Considerin' the vessels they had, an' no charts, an' poor navigatin' instruments, there's a lot o' credit comin' to 'em. Many a man wi' a Master's Certificate to-day couldn't do half as well.

"If the hurricane had jest blown itself out, the way they generally do, the Spanish cap'n would ha' been all right. But, a few minutes after the whirl o' the opposite side o' the hurricane struck 'em, along comes an enormous wave—a tidal wave it must ha' been—an' sweeps clear over the island, just rippin' away the windbreak like it was made o' straw an' washin' every single one o' the officers an' boats' crews into the sea. That was the end o' them!

"Now, aboard the *St. Jago* which had been scuttled, there had been a hundred or more Carib Indians who were bein' taken to Spain as slaves, same as they generally did in Columbus' times. When the sailors aboard the galleon saw their officers desertin' 'em, wi' all the boats, they rushed below an' freed the slaves."

"Why, Grap?"

"Hard to say why," the old wrecker answered. "Maybe it was for humanity, though that was rare enough in those days; more likely, it was because the sailors had a frantic hope that wi' every man on board workin' at top speed they could throw together a raft to save themselves from the ship which was sinkin' under their feet. There wasn't time, though, for the *St. Jago* went down sudden soon after she'd been scuttled.

"The Caribs, who can swim like sharks, didn't wait for any raft. When they felt the galleon goin' down, they jumped into the sea. This was durin' the time when the eye o' the hurricane was passin' over. They knew better'n to try an' land on the island where the Spanish officers had gone, an' started to swim with wind an' current anywhere it would take 'em. Some were drowned, some eaten by sharks, an' only four o' the Caribs managed to get as far as a little cay, some three or four miles to the lee—judgin' distances roughly—on which some mangrove bushes grew.

"They'd just about got there when the tidal wave hit them. The Caribs ducked an' twined their bodies in an' out o' the mangrove roots.

"The wall o' water struck!

"It roared over their heads, cuttin' off the tops

o' the mangrove bushes like they had been chopped with an axe, but the roots, deeply submerged, stood firm. When the wave subsided, three out o' the four Caribs freed 'emselves an' came up to the top, gaspin'."

"Great work!" cried Latimer, his eyes sparkling.

"Ay, there's more sense in natives'n most white folks think. They were safe, all right, but there wasn't nothin' to eat on that cay, an' no water. They waited a day or so, until the hurricane passed by an' the sea went down, an' then swam the three miles back to the island where the *St. Jago* had been scuttled. They had a notion that the Spaniards would ha' been washed away, an' they had seen 'em diggin' the water an' provisions into the sand.

"Sure enough, when they got there, they found the stores. White men, likely, would ha' stayed on the island until they starved to death or started to eat each other. The Caribs had too much gumption for that. They picked up some bits o' wreckage which had been washed ashore and lashed 'em together to make a raft, not to get on themselves, but to put the food an' water on. Swimmin' didn't worry 'em none.

"Startin' right off, they launched the raft on the lee side o' the island, dropped into the water behind her, an' swam easily wi' the current, pushing the raft afore them. Accordin' to their story, it took 'em half a day, a night, an' all the next day, swimmin' steady, an' then they reached Great Inagua Island (the southernmost of the Bahama Group). That was settled by Caribs, too, an' the survivors stayed there, an' their descendants are there now.

"The yarn o' the *St. Jago* has been handed down from generation to generation o' the natives—like all Indians they're great on spinnin' yarns—an' the name o' the ship is known because it was branded on the water-keg which the Caribs had dug out o' the sand.

"My grandfather, 'Ristocrat Voley,' first heard the yarn when he was salvagin' a wreck on Little Inagua. When he got there, he found that the Carib an' Black wreckers were there first. Next day, the Key Westers came along, an' not only claimed a share, but wanted to take all the Black Fleet had found. They've got different ideas about negroes in the States'n we have. Well, 'Ristocrat' wouldn't stand for it, an' stuck up for the Caribs an' Blacks. In re-

turn, the natives told him the yarn o' the *St. Jago.* An' that's all there is to it."

"It's not very precise, is it, Grap?"

The old wrecker snorted.

"What d'ye expect? Can ye see a Carib makin' a chart with correct latitude an' longitude an' all the bearin's and soundin's marked! What d'ye get out of it yerself?"

Latimer pulled himself together, for he realized that this was, in some sort, a test.

"Well, Grap," he answered thoughtfully, "it seems that the *St. Jago* was sunk off an island, protected by a bar, somewhere to the east'ard of Great Inagua. I don't see much more."

"How far to the east'ard?"

The boy reflected.

"About thirty hours' swim." Then he added, hastily, "Oh, yes, and there's the current to be added, too."

The "Admiral" nodded.

"Now ye're gettin' to it," he responded. "The first thing to find out is the direction o' the current, an' the general direction o' the wind after a hurricane, an' ye know, Lat, hurricanes at a certain time o' the year follow pretty nearly always the same course."

"I know."

"Then there's the speed o' the swimmin'. They'd be takin' it easy, for it's a long swim an' they were pushin' the small raft ahead o' them. Say two miles an hour or a little better. Now the current east o' Inagua an' makin' for the Wind'ard Passage has a varyin' speed o' between one and three-quarters to three miles an hour, dependin' where ye strike it. Allow two miles an hour for that. Allow a mile, roughly, for lee-way with the wind, though that's a bit much. That's somewhere about five miles, altogether, or a hundred an' fifty miles in thirty hours. Then, the further out to sea ye get, the slower becomes the current.

"Durin' the night, likely, the natives didn't swim at all, but jest drifted. Allowin' for all this, they might ha' been as near to Inagua as a hundred miles. It's safe to say that the spot from which the Caribs started wasn't more'n one hundred and fifty miles from Great Inagua an' not less'n one hundred miles.

"Now for the direction o' the current. Out beyond Silver Bank there's a pile o' small shoals an' these change the current a bit. Between Silver Bank and the Wind'ard Passage she runs

Sou'-Sou'-West and north o' Silver Bank about Sou'-by-West. There's been some changes in the shoals, judgin' by ol' charts, an' I've taken these into account, too. Takin' it by an' large, I'm figurin' on a location about one hundred and twenty miles East-by-Nor'-a-quarter-Nor' from the east coast o' Great Inagua."

"Why!" cried Latimer, in delight, "that ought to be as easy to find as pie! All we've got to do is to sail there and find the two islands!"

"Ye run ahead like a two-masted schooner wing-and-wing afore a gale!" growled the old wrecker, reprovingly. "In three hundred years, cays like that can change. There may be a grove o' palms on the one an' the other be cut down to a bank o' sand. I reckon on neither, for the latest Admiralty charts don't show nothing above water in that direction. But we'll find her, Latimer, don't ye worry!"

In all this Captain Jerry Voley had nothing to say. He accounted himself a first-rate salver, and with reason. Certainly, no man on the Bahamas could handle even a tiny tug with the sureness and skill he showed when he made the big *Moray* wind in and out of narrow channels and through openings in reefs which would appear

dangerous to a two-oared skiff. But he had not inherited that extraordinary intuition of reefs and shoals which the old wrecker possessed.

The negroes on the Bahamas, indeed, had a superstitious belief in the "Admiral's" powers, and declared that he "done sho' had shark's eyes an' could see in the water."

The "Admiral" was, to tell the truth, more at home with sail than with steam. He stayed aboard the *Moray* until near the supposed site of the wreck and then had himself transferred to the *Molly Day,* the smaller of the two schooners, to the huge pride of the negro crew, who fairly worshipped him. Latimer accompanied his grandfather.

Poring over a chart he had made himself, the old wrecker sat on a rough stool near the lee quarter rail of the schooner—it tired the aged sea-dog to stand—watching the color of the water, and noting the hail of the leadsman. All day long, the lead was hove continually.

Half a cable's length astern, and the same distance to windward, the *Rose* followed. Another half-cable's length astern and to windward, the *Moray* brought up the rear. A system of flag signals had been arranged to report the soundings.

Mark Hoveller was at the signal halliards of the *Rose,* Cæsar at those of the *Moray,* Captain Voley himself being at the tug's wheel. Latimer stood on the weather quarter of the *Molly Day,* calling the signals to his grandfather, who plotted them on his large-scale chart.

The first, the second and the third day passed. Each evening, early, the three vessels ran to the nearest good anchorage and dropped anchor. The search was resumed at daybreak.

Shortly before noon on the fourth day, the water under the *Molly Day* shoaled rapidly. She was creeping along at a snail's pace, under shortened sail despite the light breeze, when the "Admiral" roared:

"Hard down!"

The wheel spun, the schooner luffed up into the wind, her jibs shaking, and the mainsheet was hauled aft. The second schooner followed suit. The indicator on the *Moray* rang to "Stop!"

Latimer knew better than to ask questions, but he wondered at his grandfather's actions. Here was nothing but open sea.

"Signal the *Moray* to close in, Son," came the order.

The flags ran up, and the *Moray,* hardly

turning over her screws, edged up to the *Molly Day*.

"Three miles Sou'west-by-West-half-West," bellowed the "Admiral," "an', Son Jerry, sound as ye go!"

The captain of the *Moray,* who had stuck his head out of the chart-house window, nodded in understanding, and sheered off.

Meantime, the *Rose* was hailed, and both schooners dropped their anchors. The boats were got out, and, under instructions delivered in the old wrecker's stentorian voice, the boats' crews sounded patiently and persistently every foot of the shoal.

Nothing was found.

"Grap," suggested Latimer, a little timidly, "if the current has changed direction, mightn't it have changed speed, too? Mightn't it have run faster or slower than it does now?"

"Mighty little, if any," the "Admiral" explained. "Direction'll shift, dependin' on a lot o' things, mainly the lie o' shoals an' the nature o' the bottom. But speed, Lat, won't vary so much. This here North Equatorial Current begins 'way over near Africa. Sure, she'll race faster through a channel, but the back water on the lee of an

island'll about equalize it in the long run. Wouldn't be more than an eighth of a knot difference, at best."

"But where's the island, Grap?"

Grimly, the old wrecker pointed downwards.

"You mean it's below the sea?"

"I was figurin' on it as likely," was the reply. "If a sand-bank hasn't any palms or mangroves to hold it together, an' isn't protected by a coral reef, what's to keep it from bein' washed away?"

"What makes you so sure that there wasn't any coral on the island?"

"Use yer head!" retorted the old wrecker. "If there'd been a coral reef around the cay, would the Spanish cap'n have picked it as a soft place to lay his ship on?"

This was unanswerable and Latimer held his tongue.

Presently the *Moray* came back, and as soon as she got within hailing distance, Captain Voley called:

"Small mangrove cay, bearing a few minutes west of West-Sou'-West, three-and-a-half fathom shoal about half-way over."

"Drop the hook an' send yer boat!"

The *Moray* anchored, and the tug's boat joined

those of the two schooners in a most searching series of soundings, every variation being megaphoned to the old wrecker, who plotted them in detail on his large-scale chart.

Night came with no apparent result, but, though the "Admiral" had nothing to say, after supper he burst forth with another verse of his wrecker song:

"'Full are the lockers o' Davy Jones,
Bustin' beyond all measure,
I'll make his share all the skulls an' bones,
An' keep for my share the treasure.'"

By which infallible sign, Latimer recognized that the old wrecker was by no means disheartened by the day's proceedings.

At daybreak, next morning, all the boats were out. There was no need to tell the negroes that something was in the air. The confident manner of the "Admiral" stimulated endeavor.

"Going to find her to-day, Grap?" queried Latimer, surprised at the old wrecker's assurance.

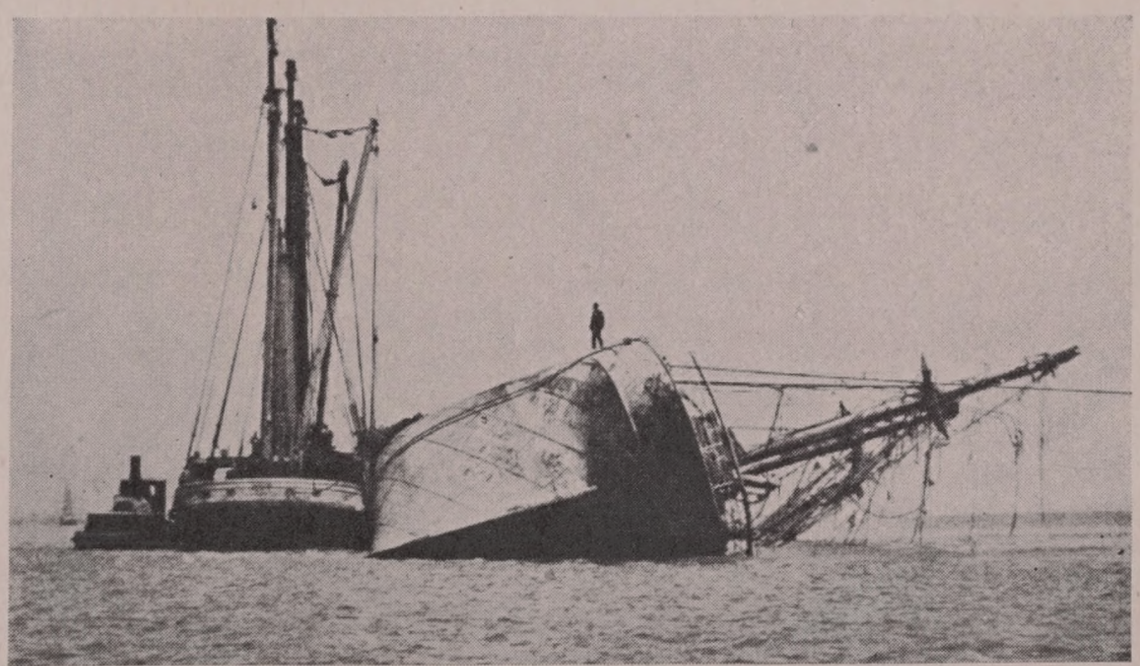
"Not goin' to look for her yet, Lat," was the surprising answer.

So indeed it seemed, for, that day, the "Ad-

Courtesy of World's Work.

UP FROM DAVY JONES' LOCKER.

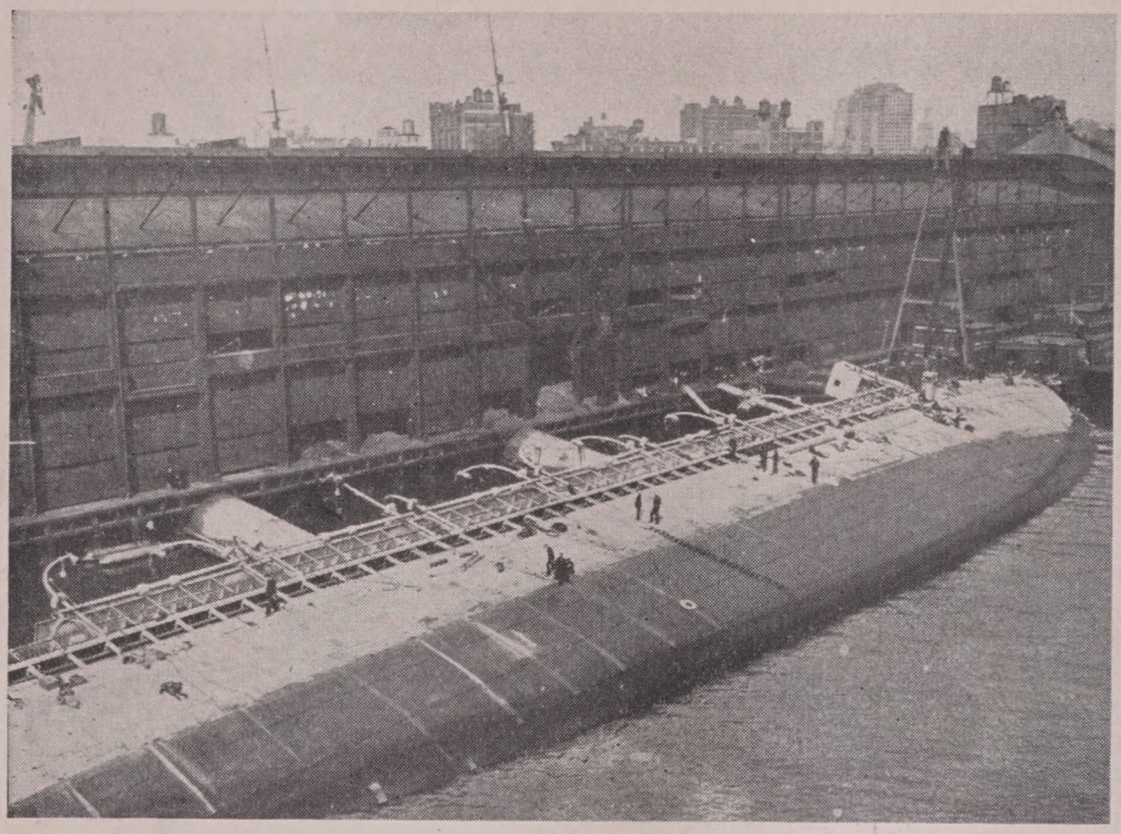
The *Blairmore*, freed from the sand by a fleet of pontoon barges.



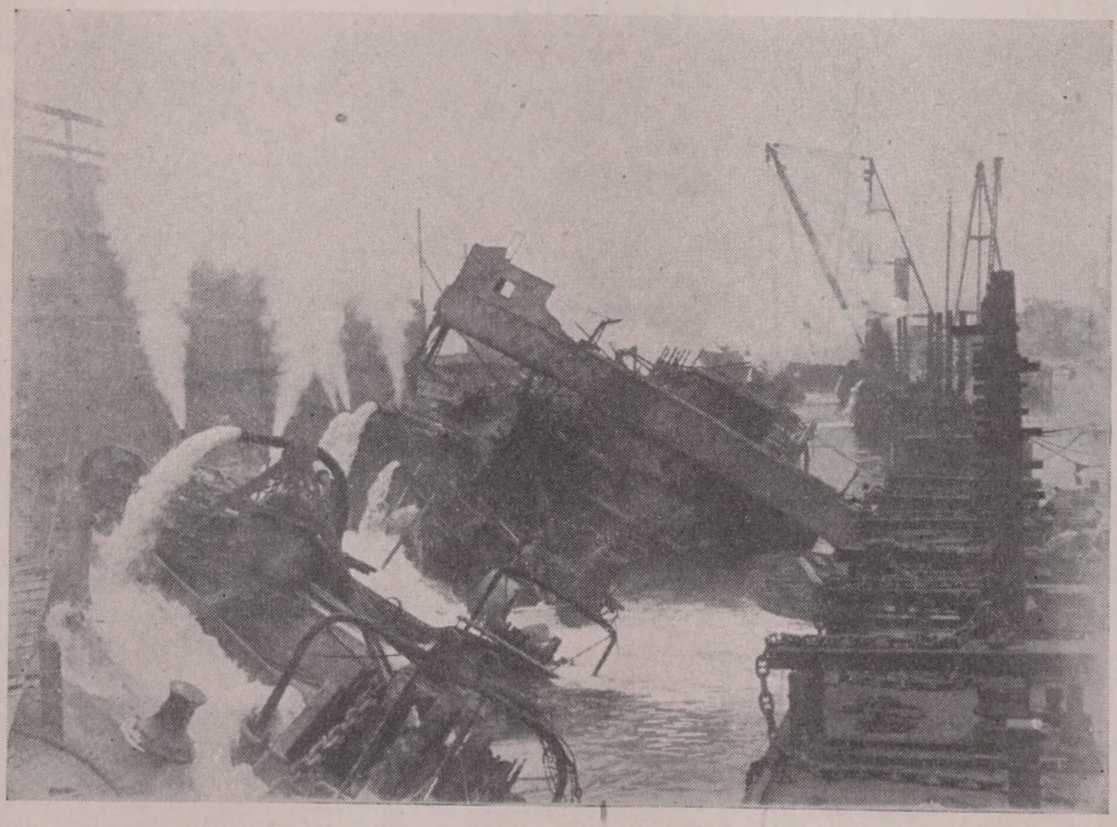
Courtesy of World's Work.

HEELED OVER, BUT AFLOAT.

The wreck in San Francisco Harbor, being towed to a ship-yard for repairs.



THE 13,000 TON LINER ST. PAUL LYING ON HER SIDE THE DAY AFTER SHE TURNED OVER.



PONTOONS AND A-FRAMES PULLING THE GREAT STEAMER TO AN EVEN KEEL.

miral" kept the boats sounding steadily, but on a long outward curve, and Latimer noticed that, as his grandfather plotted the soundings on the chart, the bank below their keels took on the outlines of an island partly closed by a bar.

Yet, so far as positive results, the day seemed to yield nothing.

That night, after supper, the "Admiral" spoke.

"Get your divin' rig in shape, Son Jerry," he said; "there's a chance."

"A small one, I'm afraid, Father," declared the captain of the *Moray;* "if the *St. Jago* is where you think she is, she'll be buried in sand."

"She may be, an' again, she mayn't," the old wrecker replied. "Judgin' by the soundin's, the current's scourin' a bit. An' if she's scourin', as ye know, anything hard, like a rock or a ship's hull, 'll be scraped clear as a whistle on one side an' filled up on the other."

But the "Admiral" did not sing that night, and Latimer judged that while his grandfather was satisfied that he had found the place, he was not so sure of being able to recover the treasure from the wreck.

Next morning, the pumping boat was got out,

and then Latimer learned for the first time the need of the twelve divers. At six o'clock, sharp, two men went down, examining the ground with the most minute care. They stayed down an hour, and another two went down in their place. So, in turns, all morning. At midday, the divers who had been the first to descend, made another trip. Thus, for twelve hours, two divers were constantly at work.

That evening the "Admiral" was grimly silent. More than half of the "bay"—as the old wrecker had charted it between the sunken banks—had been examined, and nothing found.

The same programme was carried out the next morning, when, in the middle of one of the hour spells, the two divers came up to the surface. They gesticulated, and pointed down below.

"There's a mast stickin' up out of the sand," burst forth one of the divers, as soon as the front window of his helmet was opened, "an' she's sho' an ol' ship, sah, for the truck's like nothin' we never see afore!"

"How far does it stick up out of the sand, Sam?" queried Captain Jerry, who, as always, was supervising the work on the pumping-boat.

"'Bout twice as high's I is, sah!" answered the negro.

"Upright, or leaning much?"

"About this much, sah!" was the reply, and the diver motioned with his hand to about ten degrees from the perpendicular.

The captain of the *Moray* shook his head.

"She's buried pretty deep, then," he said lugubriously. "I'll go and talk to the 'Admiral.'"

Latimer, who had remained in the pumping-boat, did not hear the conference, but the captain of the *Moray* returned, looking brighter.

"Go down again, Sam," he said, "and see if you don't come to a deeper place a fathom or two to the east'ard. The 'Admiral's' chart shows a place with deeper soundings right there, and the current may have been scouring. If you find it, scoop away the sand a little, and see if the galleon's hull lies there."

The window of the helmet was closed and the two divers sank. They returned in a few minutes.

"It's deeper there, sah, an' we think we can feel the hull. But it'll take a pow'ful lot o' diggin', sah!"

"I'll go down myself and take a look at her," said Captain Jerry.

He greatly disliked going down in a diver's dress, for he got violent headaches, but the case was so important he felt compelled to see the vessel with his own eyes. He did not stay more than a few minutes, however, and came up again.

"The ship's there, all right," he said, "and you two men get the prize money we offered for first sight of her. But you're right, Sam, she'll take a powerful lot of digging. Send Cæsar here!"

The Master Diver came from one of the schooners, where he had been sleeping since his last dive, and, in turn, descended. Over half an hour elapsed before he came to the surface.

"Well?" queried Captain Voley, as soon as the negro was free to speak.

Cæsar shook his head.

"I's afraid, sah," he said, "it's a-goin' to cost more'n it's worth. She's under two an' maybe three fathoms o' sand, all over."

"Drop a kedge with a buoy," ordered the master of the *Moray*. "Knock off, men. We'll have to figure out what to do."

Dinner was a silent meal. Captain Jerry had

given the full details of the discovery to the "Admiral," and the old wrecker found himself stumped.

"I could do it," said Captain Jerry, thoughtfully, "if we had some of those sand-pumps the big fellows use."

"Get 'em!" snapped the "Admiral."

"It wouldn't be any use, Father," was the reply. "We haven't power enough to drive them. There are only two firms in the United States that have them. Of course, there are plenty in England, France, and Germany, but that's a long way from here."

"How about relays of divers movin' the sand?"

The tug's captain shook his head.

"No use," he said, "a thousand divers couldn't get the sand far enough away so the current couldn't drift it back again. It means dredges or sand-pumps." He paused and looked at his father. "If you wanted to give Chapitt shares ——"

The old wrecker growled. Chapitt was the head of an enormous wrecking company with stations at New York, Baltimore, and Jamaica. He had always wanted the Voleys, father and son, to

become a branch of the great company, or at least enter into some form of partnership. But the "Admiral" always insisted on being independent.

Still, old as he was, the "Admiral" was not beyond seeing himself compelled to change his mind. He knew, well enough, that if Jerry Voley took the ground that salvage was impossible with the equipment at their disposal, it must be so.

"What terms can ye get?" he asked.

"Good ones, I expect," said the salver cheerfully, delighted at this sign of his father's relenting. "They're so anxious to get in with us and add the Bahamas to their string of stations, that they'll jump at almost any chance."

Latimer listened with all his ears. Like his father, he was anxious to get in touch with a bigger company and to do bigger work. It had been a Chapitt salvage operation which had first inspired him with the desire to be a modern wrecking engineer, and, the last time Mr. Chapitt had been in Nassau, he had taken an interest in the boy. That might have been merely business policy, because the lad was one of the famous Voleys, but Latimer remembered it.

"Well," answered the "Admiral" slowly, after a pause, "now that we've located the *St. Jago* an' found she can't be salvaged without help, I s'pose we've got to have that help. Ye're sure it can't be done without?"

"I wouldn't waste money even trying it!" the salver returned decidedly.

This was final.

"Have it yer own way, then," growled the old wrecker. "Me, I'd sooner leave every bar o' gold in the bottom o' the sea'n hitch up wi' these new-fangled notions. But we can't help ourselves, now, 'specially since we've got Mark Hoveller on shares. Then the Voleys have always been set on gettin' up that treasure, an' I don't want to be the one to quit. I don't hanker after leaving the *St. Jago* though, now I've found her. I'll stand by. Ye go back to Nassau in the *Moray* an' see what ye can do."

Captain Jerry shrugged his shoulders protestingly.

"What is it now?" snapped the old man.

"You know Chapitt," was the reply. "He and I get along well enough in a way, and that's about all. He's getting to be an old man, and he always talks to me as if I were about ten years

old. Big business of that kind, he'll only do with you."

The salver's suggestion was a shrewd one, for if there was one point above another on which the old wrecker prided himself, it was his activity despite his advanced age. The idea that Chapitt, the biggest wrecker in the United States, would do nothing without dealing with him personally, flattered the "Admiral's" vanity.

"I'll not leave the *St. Jago* alone, now we've found her," he said, but his tone was less mandatory than usual.

"Leave the *Molly Day* at anchor here," suggested Captain Jerry. "Latimer can stay on board her, and Cæsar. As for the schooner herself, the crew can handle her as well as any bunch of men in the Bahamas. Then, if anything leaks out, we've prior claim. It will work out all right that way."

So it was arranged, Mark Hoveller also asking to be allowed to stay. This request was readily granted, for the sailor, despite his superstitious ideas, had shown himself competent on board ship. And, as the captain of the *Moray* had said, the crew of the *Molly Day*—every man

a wrecker born and bred,—could handle the schooner in any weather.

"Lat," were the old wrecker's final instructions, "if any one comes up while we're away—Talk! If they start any funny business, such as sending divers over the side—Fight! Ye're a Voley an' the crew'll stand by ye to the last."

"Orders are orders, Grap," responded the boy. "I'll stick!"

So the *Moray* steamed away, followed by the *Rose,* leaving Latimer and Mark Hoveller aboard the *Molly Day,* with Cæsar and the wrecker crew.

CHAPTER X

THE PHANTOM GALLEON

ONCE again Latimer and Mark Hoveller were thrown together, the more so as Captain Jerry had warned his son to try to keep Mark from relating his harrowing tales of the sea to the negro crew.

"Don't forget, Lat," he had said, "that there's only one thing that the best ship's officer can't fight—and that's panic!"

So, in order to keep Mark from talking to the men, Latimer kept beside him most of the time.

Two evenings after the *Moray* had started back to Nassau, as Mark and the boy were lolling on the quarter rail, the sailor remarked mysteriously:

"'Tis the dark o' the moon to-night."

"What about it?" retorted Latimer, carelessly.

"'Tis always on the dark o' the night that phantom ships appear."

"You don't believe in that nonsense, do you, Mark?" queried the lad, scornfully.

The sailor spat out his quid, then turning, fixed a reproachful glance on his questioner, and said slowly:

"'Tis hard not to believe in a thing yo've seen!"

"What, have you really seen the *Flying Dutchman?*" asked Latimer eagerly. "Spin us the yarn, Mark!"

"Maybe yo' don't believe in it at all!"

Latimer hesitated to avow his skepticism too frankly. He had done so, once or twice before, and Mark had refused to talk. Now, waiting for the return of the *Moray,* time hung heavy on the boy's hands, and the story would while away an hour. Besides, he had never met any one who declared that he had actually seen the ghostly craft, though he had heard the story.

"Well, Mark," the boy answered doubtfully, "I don't know much about it. I've heard people talk about the Phantom Ship, but never before met any one who had seen one. I thought it was mostly a yarn."

The sailor shook his head.

"There ain't a port yo' can sail into," he an-

swered, " where yo' won't find some one what has seen a phantom ship. An' there ain't just one such craft, yo' understand, there's several, or maybe it's the same one takin' different shapes. I reckon I've heard full fifty stories, an' never two the same."

" That makes it look a bit like imagination, doesn't it? " suggested Latimer.

" A ship's log don't lie," retorted Mark, " least o' all, the log of a British man-o'-war. An' when that log says that a lot o' folk on board saw it, includin' cap'n, officers an' crew, it asks for believin', don't it? "

" Did that happen? " queried the boy, impressed in spite of himself.

" Ay, it did. *H. M. S. Bacchante,* cruisin' in the Atlantic with *H. M. S. Tourmaline* and *H. M. S. Cleopatra* as consorts, reported her on their logs, and the two sons of the Prince of Wales—him who was afterwards King Edward VII—an' who were aboard, wrote about it in their diary. I learned the entry by heart, oncet. It went something this fashion:

" ' At 4 A. M. the *Flying Dutchman* crossed our bows. A strange red light, as of a phantom ship all aglow, in the midst of which light the

masts, spars and sails of a brig, two hundred yards distant, stood out in strong relief as she came up. The lookout man on the forecastle reported her as close on the port bow, where also the officer of the watch from the bridge clearly saw her, as did also the quarter-deck midshipman, who was sent forward at once to the forecastle, but, on arriving there, no vestige nor any sign whatever of any material ship was to be seen either near or right away to the horizon, the night being clear and the sea calm. Thirteen persons altogether saw her, but whether it was *Van Diemen* or the *Flying Dutchman,* or who, she must remain unknown. The *Tourmaline* and the *Cleopatra,* who were sailing on our starboard bow, flashed to ask whether we had seen the strange red light.' "[1]

"That's queer," commented Latimer thought-

[1] The author, when at sea while a lad, was on a ship where a phantom vessel was sighted. She was reported by the lookout man as a single-topsail brig, was running in the eye of the wind at fully twelve knots, but there was no "bone" or ripple at her cutwater. The second mate and the man at the wheel saw the phantom also. All agreed that there were three men on deck beside the helmsman, who was in oilskins with a bright red cap "which looked afire." The watch below was called up, the writer among them, but though these three men said they could see her clearly and that she was coming nearer, the phantom was invisible to any one else. That voyage, it may be mentioned, was not attended by any especial bad luck.—F. R.-W.

fully. "I hadn't any idea that there were any official records."

"It wouldn't be hard to find a thousand mentions o' phantom ships in the logs o' cruises," declared Mark, "an', as I told yo', there's hardly a port out o' which sailors hail that hasn't its own story."

"I've never heard but the one tale of the Phantom Ship," responded Latimer, "and that wasn't a bit like the yarn of the *Bacchante*."

"An' how did yo' heard it, Young Master? An' what was it, if I may ask?"

"I heard it from 'Copper-Face' Phil, father of that Jules you met in Key West and who persuaded you to run the *Ocean Fay* on Little Isaacs Reef," answered Latimer, meaningly. "Since you seem to be interested in such yarns I'll tell it to you, so far as I can remember it. It went something like this, as 'Copper-Face' Phil told it to me, two winters past:

"A good many years ago, he said, there sailed on the seas between Holland and the Dutch East Indies an old Dutch captain named Vanderdecken. He had no respect for God, for the saints, nor for anything else. On one voyage, 'Copper-Face' Phil said, Vanderdecken had

killed a Catholic priest, in a fit of drunken rage; and, on another, he had thrown overboard a Protestant minister who was reproving him for singing wild songs before the women passengers.

"At last came the fatal voyage. Vanderdecken and a shipload of passengers started out from the Hague. All went well until they got as far south as the latitude of Cape of Good Hope. There it came on to blow great guns. The bluff-bowed Dutch craft did her best to get around the stormy cape, but weeks passed in a vain beating to and fro. The passengers sickened from the ceaseless tossing and the mouldy food. The crew mutinied. But Vanderdecken shot one of the complaining passengers, and hurled a marlin-spike at the ringleader of the mutineers so that the steel point pierced his skull. After that, every one let the skipper alone. Not that I blame them much!" Latimer commented. And he went on with the yarn:

"The storm grew worse and worse. Never had been seen such a tempest. But the louder the gale howled, the louder the captain laughed; the more the spray flew, the more he drank. He tried to drown the thunder by shouting ribald

songs at the sky, and held his pipe up to the lightning flash to get a light.

"The weeks passed into months. The food became uneatable. At last there came a day when the drinking water was all gone.

"That very day, a sailboat came out from the lee of Table Mountain. Her hull and her sails were shining white, as though the sunlight were beating full on her, though the sky was black with storm. A voice hailed from the boat, telling Vanderdecken that he was lost unless he put into Table Bay. Then, so 'Copper-Face' Phil said, Vanderdecken replied:

"'May I be eternally condemned if I do, though I beat about here till the Day of Judgment!'

"And the little cabin-boy, who was bringing the captain his schnapps, piped up:

"'Me, too!'

"At that, the tempest raged all the fiercer and a black squall came rushing, in which the shining sailboat disappeared.

"The day following, a Sunday, as it chanced, when all on board were half-dead with thirst, a luminous cloud came over the ship and a huge figure descended on the poop. 'Copper-Face'

Phil declared that the apparition was God, the Father, Himself," Latimer commented, "but when I protested at that, he said that he had heard others tell that it was the Holy Spirit, or St. Elmo, the patron saint of sailors. Every one on board, even the helmsman, fell to his knees on the deck.

"Not Vanderdecken, though. The tough old shell-back did not stop puffing at his porcelain pipe, nor did he raise his cap when the figure spoke.

"'Captain Vanderdecken,' said the apparition, amazed at this blasphemous insolence, 'you are out of your head!'

"'I'm the captain of this ship,' said the obstinate Dutchman, 'and I didn't ask you aboard. Get off, or I'll blow your brains out!'

"'Heed my words ——' the apparition began, but the captain interrupted him violently:

"'I'll heed nothing from an uninvited boarder on my ship!' he roared, cocked one of his pistols and fired at the figure. The pistol burst, and the bullet pierced his own arm.

"Then the apparition said:

"'From this hour, Vanderdecken, you are accursed! You shall sail forever, from Cape of

Good Hope to Cape Horn, and never, till the Day of Doom, shall you round either cape. You shall try to put into many a port and harbor, but never a one shall know your anchor. When you smoke your pipe, fumes of sulphur shall fill your mouth. You shall drink gall at all times, and chew red-hot iron for your quid. You shall keep a watch that will last forever, and never sleep, for when you close your eyes, your eyelids shall scorch as if they were burning coals. Never shall you have a calm sea or fine weather, but the spindrift shall blow over your decks eternally and the tempest shall shriek in your rigging. The sight of your ship shall be a curse to storm-tossed sailors, and every ship that sights you and suffers because of you shall add to your punishment. All sailor shirkers, rogues dying under the cat-o'-nine-tails, and sea-cowards shall become your crew. They shall torture you; and you, them. In torment shall you toil uselessly and toss ceaselessly on a stormy sea till the end of time. As for the boy, he shall have a horned forehead, a tiger's jaw and a skin rougher than a fish's scales, and, as he runs to do your errands his feet shall be raw and bleeding and never heal. Even if you or he ever re-

pents, your doom will last for a thousand years after your repentance.'

"'I defy you!' said Vanderdecken, stoutly.

"The apparition disappeared in the luminous cloud, and, at the same instant, Vanderdecken found himself alone on the ship's deck, saving only for the boy, disfigured as predicted. The passengers and the crew had disappeared with the figure into the cloud.

"Since then," continued Latimer, "so 'Copper-Face' Phil said, the *Flying Dutchman* sails the stormy seas from Cape of Good Hope to Cape Horn. Tempests and thunderbolts howl and crash around him. His craft is seen at the entrance of many a port, but though the skies be clear and the wind fair, a black vapor hangs ever over the *Flying Dutchman* as she pitches and rolls in a mist of spume and finally disappears.

"Many a ship does Vanderdecken hail and try to send aboard a letter. But if a captain takes and reads that letter he becomes a madman, his ship turns turtle and sinks outright with all hands. Even to touch the letter means death. Those who have heard Vanderdecken's hail fall sick, and those who answer it will die. The sailor

who even points a finger at the accursed craft will find his arm paralyzed. No one can help the doomed vessel or any one on board her. And so will it be forever.

"That's the yarn of Vanderdecken's ship, Mark," the boy concluded, "the way that 'Copper-Face' Phil told it to me."

"Ay," said the sailor, "an' he told it true."

"But that," objected Latimer, "isn't anything like the entry in the log of the *Bacchante!*"

"No," agreed Mark, "what the navy men saw is more like the phantom ship o' Dahul."

"And who was Dahul?" came the query.

"He was another o' these skippers on Ships o' Doom. I'll give yo' the story as it was told to me:

"This Dahul is an Algerian pirate, an Arab himself, so they say, an' so wild an' dangerous that when he's on deck there isn't one o' the crew dares turn his eyes aft. His is a black an' ugly record. But he goes too far, like many a man has done. Once he captures a brig, sailin' from Barcelona to Palermo, kills the crew an' tortures the passengers. There's a priest on board what threatens to curse him, an' Dahul nails him to the mast. There's life enough

left in the priest to curse Dahul afore he dies.

"After that, everything goes wrong with Dahul. But he defies the priest and his curse, defies the Almighty an' takes the Fiend for a helmsman. Then prizes come along thick an' plenty an' Dahul becomes rich. He wants to leave the sea, but the Fiend holds him to his contract. Burstin' with rage, Dahul heaves up a capstan bar an' strikes at the Fiend at the wheel. That gives the Fiend power over him, for, as yo' know, it's a sea-crime to strike a man at the wheel.

"Since that day, the brig carries a full crew o' sailor souls that belong to the Fiend. She brings storm, fire an' mutiny wherever she goes. Food never comes to her galley, nor sleep to her bunks. She carries neither fresh water, nor hope.

"There's men in every port ha' seen her, her hull black like a coffin an' her sails showin' red in the glare o' her burnin' spars. In a light breeze her sails are full to burstin', an' she sails in the teeth o' the wind. There's some that say they've seen her with blue fires leapin' out o' the hold, while the shrieks o' those on board rise higher'n the storm. Higher yet sounds the

laughter o' the Fiend who still stands at the wheel."

Despite his skepticism, Latimer felt a little cold shiver run over him, for the sailor's manner was impressive and convincing. And, as Mark pointed out, this story did tally with the *Bacchante's* log.

"In the North Sea," the sailor went on, "the fishermen tell the story o' Reginald Falkenberg, who killed a rival an' his bride an' was driven by his conscience to the nearest seacoast. There he found a boat waitin', with two oarsmen, one in black, an' one in white. He never saw their faces. They rowed him to a ship with all sails set, but wi' neither helm nor helmsman, an' the black figure an' the white went down to the cabin an' began shakin' dice for Falkenberg's soul. Their game will go on till the Last Day.

"Fishermen in the North Sea say that a sight o' the Falkenberg Phantom means either a streak o' good luck an' a big haul o' fish, or bad luck an' maybe a wreck, the luck dependin' on whether black or white had won the last throw o' the dice.

"When I was a-sailin' out o' Hamburg, there was a German shipmate told me he'd seen the

Death Ship. She carries a crew o' skeletons, where a sailorman has to serve a century as cabin-boy, a century as Ordinary Seaman, an' a century as Able Seaman.

"An Italian sailor told me the same yarn, but he said they'd sailed under her stern an' he could see her name. She was called the *Libera Nos*. Her skipper is called Cap'n Requiem, so they say, an' she'll sail accursed until some ship's crew boards her where every sailor is a Christian. I reckon," remarked Mark thoughtfully, "she'll sail the seas a good while!

"Ah, an' I could tell yo' o' plenty more, all phantom ships o' punishment, like Evert's ship off Cape Horn, the Dog-Fiend craft o' Brittany, the clipper *Tennessee* that's always tryin' to get into San Francisco Bay, the 'doomed dago o' the Linshotens,' an' the Hudson River packet under Heer o' the Dunderburg that sails up river from Hoboken, while the New England coasts have a dozen or more."

"But those you saw yourself, Mark," prompted the boy, who was afraid lest the sailor might wander into tales of some of these lesser phantoms.

"Ay, those I saw myself. There was three.

"The first I ever see was near the Horn. I'd signed on a full-rigged ship, the *Firefly* o' Boston, bound from Key West to Valparaiso, an' we was on our way back, bound for Baltimore. The Phantom Ship was sighted on my watch below, an' all hands were called. I ran up at once. If an Ordinary Seaman didn't move lively, in them days, he got booted up the fo'c's'le ladder, an' don't yo' forget it!

"The minute I stuck my eyes out o' the hatch, I see the watch all lined up along the rail to wind'ard. There, slidin' through the water like a Yankee clipper, was an ol' craft, the sort yo' see in pictures, high poop an' all, makin' full fourteen knots, clear in the wind's eye. I didn't get much more'n a squint at her, afore she was gone. Bein' a small shaver at the time, her build an' the way she was headin' didn't hit me right away like it did the ol' shellbacks. It wasn't until the others started to talk, an' I begun to do some thinkin', that I saw how queer she was."

"And did you have any specially bad luck that trip?" queried Latimer.

"Ay, we did that. We hit a water-logged timber-loaded derelict, just floatin' awash, off Cape St. Roque," the sailor answered. "We

never even saw her till we struck. It was a nasty smash. We was just about able to make Pernambuco with the pumps goin', an' that was all. The lookout man, him that had seen the Phantom Ship first, when we was a-goin' round the Horn, was again on the fo'c's'le head when the *Firefly* hit the derelict. He must ha' fallen overboard, for no one ever seen him again."

"Had he hailed Vanderdecken, or heard a hail?"

"Not as I knows on. But he'd pointed at the ship!"

Latimer shrugged his shoulders. It was too dark for the sailor to see the gesture, and since the boy made no uttered disbelief of his story, Mark continued:

"The next queer sight I saw was when I was ashore at Dieppe. I'd been paid off at Havre, under English articles, after three years aboard an old Indiaman what had been turned into tramp work, never touchin' an English-speakin' port in all that time. I don't like Havre, an' a shipmate wants me to go down to Dieppe with him to visit his folks.

"Me, I takes a fancy to his sister and hangs around Dieppe quite a while. I'm willin' to say

the word, but Lucile—that's her name—jest puts me off from day to day. It's the end of October an' cold an' rainy there. Me, I'm anxious to ship aboard some craft goin' to southern latitudes, but Lucile she holds me back.

"Comes the second day o' November. The evenin' afore, Lucile, she says to me, in her French lingo:

"'Come to the door, Mark, before it is dawn, and I will give you an answer at sunrise.'

"Yo' can lay yo' bottom dollar I was thar, Young Master, ay, an' a good hour afore dawn. Lucile, she slips out soon an' puts her hand on my arm. Where she's a-goin' I don't know, but I comes willin'ly enough.

"We reaches the quay. Dark it is, still, and the big red light on the breakwater, turnin' around slowly, seems to look first at us an' then out to sea. Pretty soon it gets a little more light, whitish-like, an' the mornin' fog begins to lift.

"An' then, Lucile grips my arm tighter an' points out over the harbor.

"I stares with all my eyes!

"Out o' the mist I see comin' the shadow of a fishin' schooner, rigged in a fashion I never see

afore. Her sticks were high an' slender, an' her sails were that thin I could see the spars through 'em. The falls were rigged an' the boats were swingin' from the davits, but there warn't no sound aboard, an' thar warn't no curl o' water at her forefoot.

"She runs so close I can jest about see the faces o' the men aboard, an' then, sudden an' solemn, the bell o' the big church begins to ring, an' the schooner sort o' fades away, jest like the mist.

"Then Lucile, she kisses me, softly an' tender-like, an' says:

"'My friend, we will not marry. That is *La Belle Rosalie!* No man who has seen her ever comes back to a Dieppe wife. Good-bye, my friend, and forget me. Do not become a sailor on a French ship, but sail from some other country. So will you be safe from having seen *La Belle Rosalie.*'

"An' then she slips away with the sunrise, leavin' me starin' at the water."

"And did you ever sign on a French ship, Mark?"

"Me? Never!" The answer was emphatic. "Nor sail from a French port. I ain't what yo'd

call superstitious, but I know enough to take a warnin' when I get one. Me, I don't stay in Dieppe another day but slips my cable an' makes for England."

Latimer concealed a smile at Mark's protest that he was not superstitious, but asked, only:

"What was the third one you saw?"

It was growing dark, and the sailor looked about him uneasily.

"There's other return-ships like *La Belle Rosalie,*" he began, evidently evading the answer. But Latimer, quick to catch from the sailor's manner that the withheld story was different from the others, pressed him again:

"You said you'd seen a third Phantom Ship, Mark. What was she like?"

Mark squirmed, spat out a quid that was but little chewed, and cut another one from his plug.

"It's not a good thing to talk of in the dark o' the moon," he protested, "but if yo' will have it ——"

He paused a minute or two, then began in a lowered voice:

"There's punishment ships a-plenty like Vanderdecken an' the rest. There's scores—ay, hundreds—o' ships like *La Belle Rosalie* that sail

their phantoms back to a port where some one is waitin'.

"But Fiend-Ships, or, as some call 'em, Devil-Ships, they're rare."

He paused, as though he expected Latimer to question him, but, the boy saying nothing, Mark plunged into his story:

"About nine or ten years ago, I was A. B. (Able Seaman) on an old hooker, the *Preciosa* o' Hvidsteen, sailin' under the Norwegian flag, an' bound from Hong-Kong to San Francisco. She'd been a good barque, once, but now she was keepin' afloat on a coat o' paint an' these windmill pumps that Norwegian an' Swedish ships carry. Bad food, but decent treatment wi' plenty o' grog. I shipped on board her to get back to the States. I'd had enough o' kicking around the Lower Archipelago (South Seas) as quartermaster on tramp steamers, wi' coolie crews.

"We'd cleared Hong-Kong in the monsoon an' were bowlin' smooth an' easy through the Bashi Straits, south o' Formosa, when the wind dropped all of a sudden. I was at the wheel, at the time, an' when the canvas come slappin' back against the masts, I got a Number One scare!

I thought I'd been nappin' at the wheel—something what has never happened to me!—an' let her come aback. But, no, compass card was headin' straight for the lubber's point on the course set.

"Figurin' that the mate'd make the same mistake I had, an' think the ship was slewin', I calls out:

"'Right on her course, sir!'

"'Ay, ay!' replies the mate, but dreamy-like, as if he wasn't noticin'.

"Then I sees he's lookin' off on the weather beam, like there's something wrong.

"Presently he comes aft.

"'Hoveller,' says he to me, 'what do yo' see out there?' an' he points to about two points abaft the beam.

"'Nothin' but an ol' junk, sir,' says I.

"'Ay,' says he. 'But what junk?'

"'Pirates, sir?' I asks, for it's easy to see he's worried, an' there's a good many pirates still kickin' about those seas, though they generally let European and American craft alone.

"'I wouldn't give a fog-horn hoot for junk pirates,' says he; 'the old man (the captain) has a rack o' rifles aboard.'

"He didn't say no more, for up comes the old man, hair ruffled an' eyes red. He'd been up all night takin' her through the straits an' had been asleep. Naturally, when the *Preciosa* lost way, he woke up.

"'What is it, Mr. Christensen?' he asks.

"'The Serpent Junk, sir,' answered the mate.

"'The what!'

"The mate hands him the glasses.

"The old man looks long an' steadily.

"'Call all hands, Mr. Christensen!' says he.

"They mustered, wonderin' what had happened.

"'Men,' says the skipper, 'there's an old junk on the beam, maybe a mile or a mile an' a half away. We're becalmed, an' suddenly. Yon craft may be the Serpent Junk an' if she drifts near us, she'll bring plague an' fever aboard. We'll have to tow clear. I'm tellin' yo' all, so yo' don't lose yo' wits for one thing, nor waste any time for another.'

"Then he turns to the first mate:

"'Boats clear an' out, Mr. Christensen,' says he sharply.

"An' to the second mate, who's come up from below:

"'Furl all sail, savin' the foretopmast stay-sail; an' smother the mizzen.'

"There's some o' the hands had heard o' the Serpent Junk, an' some that hadn't, but they saw the old man was in earnest, an' them sails were clewed up an' the gaskets passed in quick time. When the starboard watch came down from aloft, the port watch had got the boats free an' hangin' at the davits. There wasn't any time wasted gettin' 'em into the water. That junk was a-driftin' nearer all the time."

"And you, Mark," queried the boy, "what did you do?"

"Me, I stayed at the wheel. The boats got way on the ol' hooker, maybe a knot or so only, but it was something.

"There was just three of us left on board, the old man, myself, an' the Chinese cook. He was burnin' paper-prayers or somethin' an' singin' charms in a high voice.

"Presently the skipper comes up to me,—he was a chatty ol' boy—an' begins to talk:

"'Ever heard o' the Serpent Junk, Hoveller?' he asks.

"'No, sir,' says I, not havin' been around the China Seas much.

"'It's a queer yarn,' says the skipper. 'They say that once she was layin' in the harbor of Foo-chow, loadin' rice, when a North Chinaman come aboard an' offered the master o' the junk big money to take a whopping big horned serpent in a strong cage to the Zoo at Canton. The price was good an' the cage strong, so the master o' the junk agreed. The cage was got aboard an' lashed to the mainmast an' the junk hoisted sail an' stood across the bar.

"'But, that afternoon, so they say, the weather grew dirty. The sea-birds flew low. The muddy sea turned gray. The clouds were greasy-lookin', like smoke from an oil-burnin' steamer, an' by night, it was sure that a gale was comin'.

"'The junk snugged down an' was ready when the storm hit them with a howl. But, so they tell, louder than the storm, came a hiss from the cage lashed to the mainmast. The old junk trembled as the wind hit her, but she trembled more as the great serpent began to wake an' move in his cage.

"'Then, in the glare of a flash o' lightnin', the men aboard the junk saw the body o' the evil creature swell an' grow until the cage burst like

a crate, an' the huge body o' the serpent, four times as big as when they put him on board, slithered his way along the deck. His eyes glared green like a starboard side-light seen through a fog, an' the breath o' the monster reeked poison.

"'As the lightnin' flashed a second time, the master o' the junk saw that every man aboard—even the steersman—had leaped into the rigging. Sailor-like, he sprang to the tiller himself. There was just one cry heard by the sailors above the shriekin' o' the gale, an' no more.

"'All night the junk drifted. Next mornin', with sunrise, the sea calmed down, an' the sailors, lookin' down fearfully, saw the captain gone an' the main-hatch open. The mate, an Amoy man, greatly darin', clambered down an' clapped the hatch-cover on the coamings. A spar was lashed over the hatch, an' for the moment, the crew felt safe.

"'But their provisions were below. The wind died to a calm. The sea came like glass. The junk lay idle. Two days, without food or water, they waited for a wind. Then the Amoy mate an' a sailor from Shanghai, drawin' short swords, decided to risk one try for the food.

"'Cautiously the hatch-cover was lifted, but just as the mate was peerin' over the coamings, the head o' the creature shot up out o' the hatch an' from his nostrils came a blast o' hot an' fetid breath, which killed the mate an' the Shanghai man like a lightnin' stroke. The hatch-cover was slammed back an' lashed tighter than ever.

"'Nothin' was left but escape. Without water, without food, the crew got out the little boat an' rowed away for the distant shore, leavin' the junk an' the serpent, but takin' with 'em the bodies o' the mate an' the Shanghai man.

"'They made the shore. Penniless an' fear-stricken, they separated an' went to their homes. But they went to their homes to die! And, Hoveller, they say that in every village where a man went who'd been aboard o' that junk, the plague broke out an' took hundreds—ay, thousands—o' lives.

"'An' she wanders these waters still, an' will wander until some man has the courage to board her an' take her back to a harbor. But what man dares, knowin' it means his death an' the bringin' o' the plague!'

"The old man turns to watch the junk, an' I

looks at her, too. There's no doubt she's gettin' nearer.

"'Looks like she's catchin' us, sir,' says I, trying to speak quiet-like.

"'The calm always lasts one watch, they say,' he answers. 'When the first cat's-paw comes, we're safe. The wind's never been made that'll fill the sails o' the Serpent Junk.'

"But she creeps nearer an' nearer, for ye know that two ships in a calm attract each other an' it takes the crews o' both, pullin' in opposite directions, to keep 'em apart.

"Me, bein' at the wheel, I was furthest aft, an' I couldn't help thinkin' that I'd be the first to get the poison o' the plague ship.

"She wasn't two cables' length away when there comes a ripple on the water.

"'Give me a hand, Hoveller!' sings out the skipper.

"I drops the wheel, an' gives him a hand-over-hand on the gaff-halliards, an' dodges back to the wheel. She pays off nicely an' begins to foot it through the water.

"The mates an' boats' crews drop back, the boats are run up to the davits again, we crowd on sail, an' there's not a man aboard that isn't

ready to do a hornpipe when he sees the Serpent Junk fadin' away astern.

"Them's the three phantom ships I've seen, Young Master, an' yo'll allow I've got some reason for believin' in sech things!"

Latimer found no answer. The boy was wise enough to see that traditions which are universal in all seas and which have existed for many centuries may possibly have some foundation in fact, and denying belief in Mark's visions would neither make them true nor false.

"You've given me plenty to think about, Mark," was his non-committal rejoinder.

"Ay, an' I could tell yo' plenty more," said the sailor, and, with a concluding phrase or two, went below. Latimer watched the sea a while, then followed suit.

Towards midnight, he was awakened, suddenly.

"Mas'er Latimer," said a voice which he recognized as that of Cæsar, the Master Diver, "will yo' step on deck a minute, sah!"

Latimer tumbled out at once, for there was a note of urgency in the negro's voice.

On reaching the *Molly Day's* deck, he judged, from a rustling murmur about him, that every

man of the crew was there, but he could barely see them. It was a pitch-black night, the stars not invisible but thinly veiled with cloud. The riding light, swinging at the masthead, was the only bright spot.

For a moment the boy was dazed, his eyes heavy with sleep. Then, as little by little his vision cleared and the pupils expanded, he became aware of something faintly, very faintly, luminous upon the water.

Slowly this wisp of luminosity took shape. He could see where it began and ended, and with infinite gradations, as though he were watching a flower grow, there became impressed upon his retina the form of a ship.

Towering tall of prow and of poop was she, and deep in the waist. Her masts, suggested rather than actually seen, were transparent against the sky. Her sails were full, as though a strong breeze were filling them, but the wraith —if wraith she were—did not move upon the water.

"Mas'er Latimer," said Cæsar in an awe-stricken whisper, "it's the galleon, sah!"

"The *St. Jago!*" cried the boy.

And, as though the naming of her had given

form, the shadowy outlines of the old treasure-ship grew clearer.

The luminosity took form and apparent substance. Upon the hull were visible, now, the portholes and windows of the castellated poop. Even the scroll-work could be seen.

"Mas'er Latimer! Mas'er Latimer! She's puttin' out her boats!"

There was terror in Cæsar's voice, and, in an instant, the boy sensed the danger.

The negroes feared that the boats from the phantom were going to board the *Molly Day*.

A hoarse mutter arose around him.

There flashed over the boy his father's phrase:

"There's only one thing that the best ship's officer can't fight—and that's panic!"

If one man of the crew made a break for the anchor cable, or touched a rope, even if one voice were raised to suggest it, all was lost! A single second might precipitate the panic which Latimer felt was surging upwards in the fears of the crew.

He must admit to the apparition, even if only to humor the superstitions of those he had around him.

His young voice rang out, confidently:

"Watch the boats, boys! They're going to land on the island!"

The murmur lulled. The men were watching, their eyeballs staring, their muscles tense. For the moment, the suggestion had overborne their fears that ghosts of men long dead were about to board the schooner.

The prophecy came true. The phantom galleon's phantom boats shot out for the site of the island, now beneath the water, where the "Admiral" had plotted it on the chart.

And there, faintly yellow in the dim starlight, gleamed a band of sand, not ten fathoms from the *Molly Day's* counter.

The phantom boats were near, very near!

Latimer, his senses rendered acute by the tenseness of the situation and the responsibility of knowing that everything depended on his coolness, heard a scuffling of feet.

The men must not be allowed to move! Their attention must be held!

"The crew will be bringing up the slaves from below! Watch, boys!" he cried.

The diversion acted upon primal curiosity. Again the men stood still.

Upon the galleon's deck, forms could be seen

moving, faint, hardly to be distinguished from the dimly luminous mass. Then, like the passing of vague shadows across the soft gleam, there shot the wraiths of Caribs diving from the doomed ship.

Once more Latimer's voice sounded assuringly:

"She's been scuttled, now! In a minute or two, she'll go down!"

Again, silence! The boy felt that as long as he could keep control, as long as white man's reason could dominate black man's feeling, as long as he could discount the terror of the unexpected by showing that he knew what was about to happen, so long could the superstitious fears of the negroes be held in check.

He was guessing wildly, skeptical at heart, unwilling to credit the testimony of his senses, yet conscious that the tragedy of the *St. Jago* was being reënacted before his eyes.

The minutes passed.

Then, slowly, the phantom galleon heeled slightly, and began to sink by the bow, listing to starboard as she went. Lower and lower she sank, half righted, came to an even keel, and plunged stern first into the sea.

The luminous gleam died out. The yellowish sheen of the sank-bank faded. The landing boats vanished, to be seen no more.

"All over, boys!" cried Latimer, cheerily. "Time to turn in!"

One by one, some still silent in their fear, others laughing over-loudly in reaction, the wreckers went below.

But the boy, himself, remained on watch until sunrise, staring at the sea where the phantom galleon had sunk.

THE PHANTOM SHIP.

In this form is the strange craft most frequently reported. Scarcely a year goes by that some ship's log does not record sighting the spectral vessel.

THE SPECTRE OF THE CAPES.

Early navigators believed that both Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope were guarded by a storm-spirit of destruction.

CHAPTER XI

THE COFFER-DAM

NEXT day the *Moray* arrived, greatly to Latimer's relief. He had held the crew of the *Molly Day* from panic, but had fears that, if the apparition should come a second time, he might not be so successful. In order to give an accounting of his stewardship, he went aboard the tug as soon as she arrived and told the story in exact detail, as far as he could remember it, receiving praise from his grandfather for his presence of mind, and praise from the "Admiral" was rare.

"What do you suppose the phantom really was, Grap?" asked the boy.

The old wrecker shrugged his shoulders, and drank a glass of grog.

Captain Jerry Voley, however, felt it was incumbent on him to make some sort of an explanation, lest Latimer might become superstitious.

"I suppose it can be explained, in a way," he interjected. "You say that Mark had been tell-

ing you stories of Phantom Ships all evening, so his mind and yours were full of the idea. He may have been talking about it to the crew. Negroes aren't exactly what you'd call brainy, but their minds are quick to catch impressions. If one or more of the crew caught the infection from your minds, it would spread. Call it mob telepathy, if you like, and say that each one visualized what was in the other's mind. After all, there's no way of comparing what each man saw. The only point that's sure is that each of them saw something. It's a lame explanation, perhaps, but it's better than nothing."

The old wrecker snorted.

"I don't know what's come over folks to-day! Ye can't be content with nothin'! Ye've got to try an' explain, have ye? Ye've got to try an' show that what a whole ship's crew has seen, ain't so! Yah! The trouble wi' ye, Son Jerry, is that ye ain't got courage enough to say there's something ye don't know. Ye've got a brain like a chart! Everything that ain't marked on it, ain't there. But there's many a rock in the sea, Son Jerry, that ain't charted yet, an' there's many a happenin' in this world that the brain don't know! So both get wrecked!"

The captain did not retort. Argument was useless and would only irritate the "Admiral," who was in none too good a temper. Latimer, who had wanted to ask about the plans for the raising of the *St. Jago,* refrained until his grandfather turned in, which he did every night, with the regularity of a chronometer, when nine o'clock came round. Despite his ninety years, the old sea-dog could stay up all night, if need be, but except when on a wrecking job, or in bad weather, he never broke his rule of early retiring.

"What happened about Chapitt, Dad?" queried the boy, as soon as the "Admiral's" cabin door had closed.

"We've arranged it, in a way," was the reply. "I cabled to New York and they cabled back that Old Man Chapitt was at Miami. So, instead of waiting for letters or cables from there, we ran the *Moray* over."

"And Grandfather and Mr. Chapitt got together!" The boy grinned. "That must have been worth hearing."

"It wasn't." Captain Jerry made a grimace. "Father was in one of his ugliest moods and roared about that swell hotel as though he were

scrapping with a Key West wrecking gang in a full gale. I think he'd have been thrown out of the place if he'd been talking to any one else. But Chapitt is one of the owners of that string of hotels they've built on the edges of the Florida swamps."

"How did Chapitt take it?"

"Well," was the reply, "I'm bound to admit that Old Man Chapitt was doing some bellowing himself. He's a wrecker, too, after all, and the polish isn't any too deep. The folks in the hotel must have thought a hurricane was brewing. I kept quiet, mostly, just answering questions about salvage, when one or the other shot one at me.

"The noise was mostly noise, though. Chapitt knew that Father would never have come to him unless he had to, and that gave him the upper hand. He turned down flatly the 'Admiral's' idea that the Chapitt outfit should come and work under his direction for a fixed sum, or for a share in the prize."

"Why?"

"Because Chapitt wanted to boss the job himself. He's retired, but he likes to take a fling at a big thing, once in a while, and, seeing he was

already at Miami, with his yacht *Humming-bird,* a treasure-hunt would be an amusement to him. He wanted to take over the whole job and pay us a share for locating the *St. Jago.* Then Father just shook the building with his thunderings. I never saw him so mad.

"To wind up, they made an agreement that we should provide the *Moray,* four wrecking schooners and crews, and six divers, with our full equipment. The Chapitts are to send the *Mastodon*—their big pumping craft—twelve pontoons and six divers, and, besides, a staff of wrecking engineers. We're to take charge of the diving operations, the Chapitts of the raising operations.

"One-fifth of the total treasure found is to come to us—they fought over that proportion for about two hours—for the locating of the treasure-ship. The expenses of both parties are to be taken out of the remaining four-fifths of the treasure. What treasure is left—if any—is to be split three ways, one to them, one to us and one as a sinking fund out of which to pay claims or court costs if any legal questions come up. Mark Hoveller's share will come out of that."

"Not so bad, Dad," commented Latimer.

"We get more than they do. But what's the idea of 'raising operations'? Surely Chapitt doesn't think of raising the *St. Jago!* And, if he did, wouldn't the galleon belong to Spain?"

"It's just the idea of raising her that got the arrangements settled at last. Chapitt showed Father that, if the galleon could be got up, she was such a historic vessel that she'd be worth a lot of money, much more than merely if the treasure were salvaged. Chapitt just about said that he'd buy out our share, so as to dicker with the Spanish government himself for the ship."

"But the treasure!" protested the boy. "If we get up the *St. Jago,* that'll prove that the treasure belongs to Spain, while if we only get up from her the gold at the bottom of the sea, on a sand-bank lying outside the three-mile limit of any nation's possession—the way you explained it to me the other day—all the treasure would be ours."

Captain Jerry looked slyly at his son.

"I reckon between two old wreckers like the 'Admiral' and Chapitt," he said, "there won't be any more money paid back to Spain than there need be."

"I don't see how," said Latimer stoutly.

"You won't be expected to know how," was the sharp retort. "You can leave that to your elders."

The boy sat silent under the rebuke. He knew, that in many wrecking operations, queer things happen, largely because some of the medieval and unjust laws dealing with salvage in various European countries have never been repealed. Hence, when treasure-ships are concerned, salvage operators often prefer to maintain secrecy rather than to evoke costly lawsuits under those semi-obsolete statutes.

In the course of the afternoon, the *Rose* came and took up her station, and great was the yarn-spinning aboard that schooner when the men from the *Molly Day* rowed over and told the tale of the phantom galleon! But the "Admiral" was back with them again, and the negroes had implicit faith in him.

Early the following morning, a trim white yacht, powerful, despite her long flowing lines, joined the group. Latimer had never seen the *Humming-bird* before, though he had often heard of Old Man Chapitt's yacht. She swung to her anchor, not far from the *Moray,* and made the powerful wrecking tug look like a clumsy

barge by comparison. Yet, of the two, the *Moray* was the sounder craft.

A boat came dancing over the waters, and Chapitt, whose wealth had not made him in the least arrogant, was aboard. He frankly invited himself to dinner aboard the *Moray,* showed himself in high good-humor, and completely broke down the " Admiral's " latent hostility by tales of the wrecking days of old. He was nearly thirty years younger than the head of the Voley clan and deferred to his senior's experience in a way that was very gratifying to the Bahaman.

When it grew late in the afternoon, Chapitt rose to go, inviting Latimer to come and take dinner on board the *Humming-bird.* Captain Voley accepted on behalf of the lad, for he had great hopes of being able to arrange a partnership on some basis, and, in that case, Latimer would become a member of the firm when he was grown up.

The *Humming-bird* was, to the boy's eyes, a marvel. While her fittings were luxurious, they were solid and seaworthy. Gear was neatly coiled and the decks as white as snow, but there was no effort—as on some pleasure yachts—to remove the appearance of nautical utility. Un-

doubtedly the *Humming-bird* could make good weather, under either sail or steam.

Chapitt and the boy dined alone. The head of the great wrecking company made no effort to question Latimer about the *St. Jago,* nor any of the affairs of the Voleys. His hospitality was not marred by curiosity. Instead, he laid himself out to entertain the boy with stories of the great salvage operations he had conducted in all parts of the world.

One casual reference he made to "raising the *Utopia* with a coffer-dam" especially caught Latimer's attention, because of what his father had said, and he asked for further information.

"You want to hear about the *Utopia,* Mr. Voley"—it was the first time Latimer had been called "Mr." and tickled him enormously—"there wasn't anything so very sensational in our work on that, but it was an important case, just the same.

"The *Utopia* was an emigrant steamer, bound from Genoa to New York, with over 1,000 steerage passengers, and some hundred or two in the first and second cabins. I don't exactly remember how many, now, but she had nearly 1,300 persons on board, all told.

"Although it was in June—1895, I think—the weather in the Mediterranean had been stormy. The *Utopia,* in order to avoid a bad gale raging in the straits, ran into Gibraltar Bay. The anchorage there, by the way, is rather tricky. The seamanship displayed wasn't very good, and, either by reason of some mishandling of the deck-crew, or by poor management of the steamer herself, she was a long time dropping her hook after she lost way. It was blowing great guns, too, and the anchor dragged. To give it holding, they let out more cable. But, what with one thing and another—poor seamanship, a heavy gale, and a dragging anchor, the *Utopia* drifted down with some force on the ram bow of *H. M. S. Anson,* a British battleship at anchor, and impaled herself on the ram.

"You can imagine what a terrible gash was made in the plates of the *Utopia!* She careened and sank almost immediately. Just four minutes passed between the time she struck the ram of the *Anson* and the moment she disappeared beneath the waves. Yet, short as that time was, so perfect had been the discipline on board the *Anson,* that, in a trifle under two minutes, every one of the battleship's boats was in the water,

and the man-o'-war's men rescued 1,100 out of the 1,300 in the ensuing two minutes before the *Utopia* went down.

"She lay in shallow water, almost in the fairway, with her funnel and her masts showing above the surface. Under the present British shipping laws—which are generally adopted by all the maritime nations of the world—if a vessel lies in a channel where she is an obstruction to navigation, the authorities have the right to order the owners to commence salvage operations immediately. If they fail to do so, port authorities or government authorities may salvage her themselves or order her immediate destruction.

"As it happened, a British wrecking company, with whom we are affiliated, had been engaged for some time in raising the tank-steamer *Pluto* which had sunk off the Canaries, and we had sent equipment also. That was a big job, too, but there was nothing spectacular about it. The owners of the *Utopia* cabled to that British company to take charge, so both its wrecking outfit and ours hurried from the Canaries to Gibraltar.

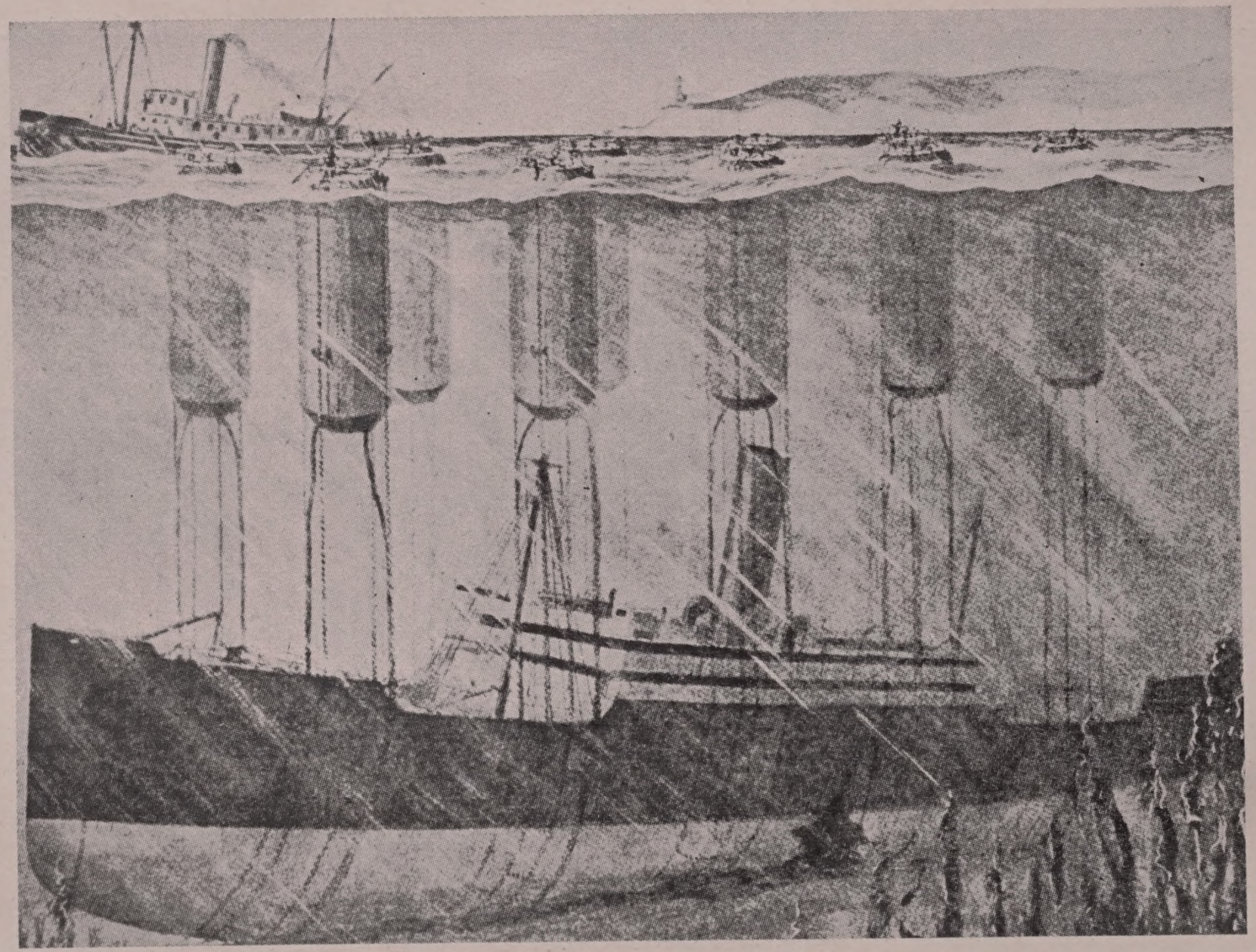
"The *Utopia,* as I said, lay in shallow water.

Her stern was a trifle over seven fathom—fifty-seven feet, to be exact—below the surface, and she had a heavy list to port. That list meant a lot of extra trouble, for the steamer was too big to be lifted by pontoons. The best way to raise her was to build a coffer-dam about her. Do you know what a coffer-dam is, Mr. Voley?"

"Only in a general sort of way, Mr. Chapitt. It's a construction of some kind, made to keep the water out."

"Yes," was the doubtful answer, "but that is not a very clear description. There are a good many different kinds of coffer-dams. The purpose of them, in salvage, generally, is to create a means whereby the water which is above a wreck and which is pressing it down, can be removed. Let me illustrate by showing you what we did with the *Utopia*.

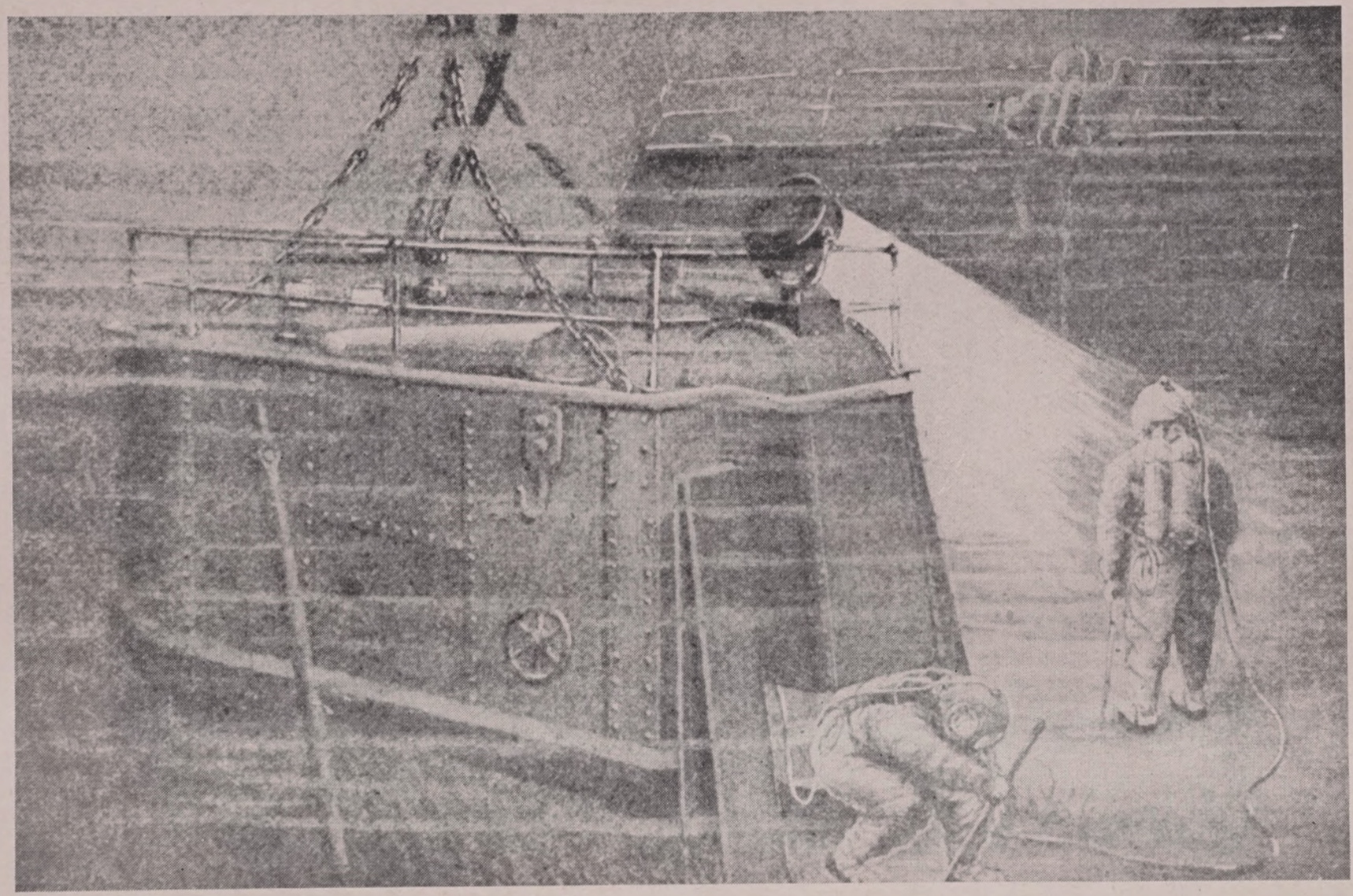
"She hadn't been sunk very long, and the bottom, at Gibraltar Bay, is tolerably hard, scoured out by the current. We were able to work directly on the ship. We built a strong frame of close-grained chestnut wood—there's plenty to be got in Spain—riveting that frame to the sides of the ship. You'll get the idea, easily, if you think of that frame as extending upwards the



Courtesy of Scientific American.

HUGE VERTICAL PONTOONS AT WORK.

Raising a sunken vessel by pumping water out of steel tanks which hold the steamer in slings. When lifted a few feet, the vessel (still under water) is towed to a shallower spot. When she grounds, the pontoons are refilled with water, sinking them; the wire slings are then tightened and the pumping begins anew.



Courtesy of the Scientific American.

A Modern Air-Lock in Use.

Divers working on a submerged vessel, in self-contained suits, obviating the necessity of a long air-hose from above.

rail of the steamer all round, to the surface of the ocean.

"The frame was made double, the outer and the inner skins being about eight inches apart, and the space between was filled with puddled clay. This packed down, of course, making the frame or coffer-dam water-tight. Then heavy braces—logs a couple of feet thick—were spiked from side to side above the deck of the ship, and all the way to the surface of the sea. You can see the coffer-dam had to be built enormously strong, to resist the tides and currents below the surface, and the waves at the top. It would have to resist a still stronger pressure when the pumps should start.

"When this at last was finished, the divers patched with timbers and wreck-mats the hole in the side of the *Utopia* which had been made by the battleship's ram. Of course, this patch couldn't be absolutely water-tight, but where small leaks were too numerous they were plugged with a special cement we use made of freshly-killed bullocks' blood and slaked lime, which is entirely waterproof.

"At last all was ready for the pumps. We put two of the wrecking pump-steamers beside

her, one on either side, and started them. Those pumps, you know, can throw almost a ton of water a minute, and it wasn't long before the coffer-dam was empty of water and the deck of the *Utopia* was exposed. Then the pump pipes were dropped into the hold of the *Utopia,* taking the water out of her hold. As she emptied, with her own buoyancy and that of the wooden coffer-dam, the steamer lifted slowly.

"We didn't let her get too high, because the coffer-dam might make her top-heavy, but, as soon as she was off the bottom, we hitched a tow-line to her and pulled her into shallower water, until she grounded again. Then the pumps were again set at work, taking some more water out. She lifted again, and we towed her closer in. Then we started dismantling the top part of the coffer-dam, which was sticking high out of the water, pumped the *Utopia* out some more, towed her further in, and so on, until we beached her, so that her shattered side was high and dry at low tide. The rip in her side was patched with steel plates, the pumps were put in her again and she was pumped dry. Then, at high tide, rollers being put under her, she was refloated and towed to Glasgow for permanent repairs.

"It took us a trifle over three weeks to build the coffer-dam, with eighty divers at work, two hours on and six off, day and night, but it required just one hour to lift her from the bottom from the moment that the pumps began. The job cost us about $50,000 and the ship was worth nearly half a million when we got her to the surface. Counting the time for patching and towage to Glasgow, we were not more than six weeks on the job, in all, and the courts awarded us $200,000 for our work. Pretty good haul, eh?"

"Yes, sir," declared Latimer enthusiastically. "And cheap, too, for if you hadn't done it, the owners would have lost every cent of their half-million."

"Yet," warned the salvage chief, "don't think that they're all so easy. Once we set out to raise the ship *Scottish King,* which had gone over a rock-reef off the shore of Newfoundland, and tried the device of forcing the water out of her by compressed air. We got her off the reef, but the job cost us $60,000 and the award was that she was only worth $50,000 when afloat, of which we only got a third. You see, even in our big modern business, there's plenty of risks."

"And it's such a splendid work!" declared Latimer, his eyes kindling.

"It's interesting all the time," the salvage chief agreed. "It's mighty seldom that any two wrecks are alike. Most of the time, each one brings a new problem which has to be handled in a different way.

"One of our assistant salvage engineers—the youngest chap on our staff, by the way—found himself in an awkward fix when he went up to see about salvaging the steamer *Florian,* which had struck on a ledge near Cape Race, Newfoundland. She lay badly. The water outside where she lay was studded with rocks, so close together and so near the surface that it wasn't safe to bring the tugs to her. And, if we put out an extra long tow-line we would have no control over the wreck and she would tear herself to pieces coming off. It was late in the autumn, our big salvage outfits were off on another job, there was no time to send to Europe for equipment and something had to be done at once.

"This young chap got to St. John's, Newfoundland, and set two shipyards at work on a hurry job, making two shallow coffer-dams—more like pontoons—sixty feet long, by twelve

wide and twelve deep. These were of single frame device, so as to be light, and carefully caulked, valves being inserted near the bottoms at each end. Owing to their shape and build, the coffer-dams drew very little water.

"Meantime, workers on the wreck had cut a series of holes in the hull of the *Florian,* below the level of her 'tween-decks, and huge pitch-pine logs were passed through these apertures, so that they projected twenty feet on either side. If I remember rightly, there were sixteen of these logs.

"The two coffer-dams were then towed from St. John's, to points abeam of the wreck, the valves opened and the coffer-dams partly sunk. They were then dragged towards the *Florian* and sunk further, until the coffer-dam on each side was below the protruding logs which passed through the wrecked vessel. The valves in the coffer-dams were then closed, pumps started simultaneously on both, and, as the water was pumped out of the two coffer-dams, and they rose, they lifted the ship off of the rocks. A long tow-line was run out, safely now that the wreck was afloat, and the *Florian* slipped into deep water. She was towed into the harbor of St. John's, with the two coffer-dams still holding her

up. The young engineer got promotion on that job.

"Of course, as you know, in many simpler cases, ordinary barges or schooners act as these coffer-dams did and the lifting force is the tide."

"Yes, Mr. Chapitt," the boy agreed, "we did that ourselves with the *Petrel,* a small Mexican coasting steamer. We passed cables under her and fastened them to schooners, four on each side. When the tide dropped, we tautened the cables. As the tide rose, lifting the schooners, it lifted the *Petrel* with them. The *Moray* towed her into where the water was a little shoaler. There she grounded. At low tide we took up a little more slack on the cables, and up she came a couple of feet at the next high tide. We did that, five or six times, until she was well out of the water. Then the *Moray* towed her, eight schooners and all, to the dry dock at Key West."

The salvage chief nodded.

"That," he said, "is simply the pontoon system, only using the schooners as pontoons. Some of these days, if you have time, I'll tell you about some of the wonderful work that has been done with modern pontoons. But I suppose

you'll be wanting to go back to the *Moray,* or they'll be thinking that I've kidnapped you!"

Latimer went back to the wrecking tug, but not to sleep at once. He was too much excited by the tales that Mr. Chapitt had told him, especially that of the raising of the *Utopia.* When at last he did fall asleep, his dreams were full of the salvage of huge ocean liners from the deepest abysses of the ocean, while phantom ships and giant squids rioted through his brain.

There was a couple of days' delay before the Chapitt equipment appeared on the scene, the great pumping steamer *Mastodon* towing the barges, but not an hour's delay after it arrived. Chapitt, before he left Miami, had telegraphed full instructions, and the barges brought every possible item of material that could be needed.

It did not prove an easy job. Unlike the *Utopia,* the *St. Jago* lay buried in sand. Nothing towards the actual raising could be done until the deck of the galleon was exposed, so that the work of building the coffer-dam could be begun. Then Latimer realized what his father had meant by "sand-pumps."

The Chapitts had sent their largest wrecking steamer, with electrically driven submergible

force-pumps, which, under full pressure, could discharge eight hundred tons of water per hour from a depth of fifty feet. These pumps, moreover, were adjustable by special attachments to the pumping of water mixed with sand, and could move one hundred tons of mixed sand and water per hour, a suction system being employed to equalize the proportion of the mixture. A dumping device, rigged up on two of the barges, received this volume of commingled water and sand, allowed the water to flow back into the sea, held the sand, and automatically tripped the solid matter back into the barge as soon as the hopper was filled. It took but half an hour to fill a barge, and one of these was brought up, empty, while the other was unloaded. The unloading was done by self-filling buckets, worked by steam, there being a small stationary derrick on each barge.

It seemed almost like magic to Latimer, but the sand in which the *St. Jago* was buried began to diminish as though it were melting. More sand slid down from all sides as the depression deepened, but the pumps did not cease night or day, and, in fifty hours, the *St. Jago* lay exposed in a deep valley of sand, the sides of which had

reached the gradient beyond which they would not slide.

The instant that the deck had been exposed, the engineers of the Chapitt company had gone down with their expert divers and surveyed the situation. With the *St. Jago* cleared of sand, the greater part of the difficulties seemed to be surmounted. Word was given for the beginning of the building of the coffer-dam.

And then, quite suddenly, the "Admiral" revealed an unlooked-for danger.

"Can ye get her up in a week, Chapitt?" he demanded.

"No, surely not."

"Then all yer work'll be no good."

"Why not?"

"Big blow comin', likely a hurricane."

"Why, I was looking at the glass this morning! I didn't see anything wrong."

"Nor I," said the old wrecker, "but I feel it."

The salvage chief dropped the subject, but, an hour or so later, he hunted up Captain Voley.

"Your father says there's bad weather coming," he announced abruptly.

The master of the *Moray* looked up in surprise.

"Hurricane?" he asked.

"That's what he said!"

"Reckon I'll get ready to run back to Nassau."

"But there's no sign, either in sea or the sky, and the glass foretells fair weather."

"A barometer is a mighty sensitive instrument, Mr. Chapitt," was the reply, "but Father's senses are a whole lot more sensitive. I thought I knew more than he did, one time, and, because the glass was quiet and there was every appearance of fair weather, I stayed out on a wrecking job, after he said we ought to run for shelter. I all but lost the *Moray* with every one on board in consequence. I would have lost her if Father hadn't taken the wheel and got her into a cove I didn't know anything about, and which wasn't marked on the charts. Anything Father said about reefs or about weather on these banks, Mr. Chapitt, you can take for gospel."

Chapitt was stubborn himself, but he was no fool. If he had been, he would not have built up his wrecking company to be the most important on the American coast. He sought out his chief salvage engineer and told him of the warning.

"Funny!" commented the latter. "The nig-

ger cap'n o' the *Molly Day* told me, just a little while ago, that he smelt wind. Said he dreamt of a big dog howling, last night. One of the divers, too, reported that 'the sea-bottom felt angry.' You know, Mr. Chapitt, some of these fellows have an uncanny foreknowledge of weather."

"Suppose we knew there was a hurricane coming, what do you think we ought to do?"

"If there's time," said the engineer, "we ought to make exact measurements of the galleon, get into a protected harbor and make the two sides of the coffer-dam, to measurement, in shelter. Then, when calm weather comes, we can tow them here and bolt them directly to the galleon. It would be a better system, anyway, for the less hammering there is on that four-hundred-year-old hull, the better."

"That's going to cost us more, isn't it?"

"Yes, Mr. Chapitt, quite a bit more. But, from what they tell me about these West Indian hurricanes, one would smash a coffer-dam all to bits, no matter how strongly we built it. And, if it were already bolted to the galleon, it would pull the old craft to pieces, sure.

"You know, sir, she's about ready to crumble

if you touch her. The wood's all spongy. I've already given orders to have tarpauling nailed on her from stem to stern. What's more, as soon as I can get her on an even keel, I'm going to send divers down into the hold to see what we can do about interior bracing. I'm afraid of having her collapse in on herself."

"Is she so frail, then?"

"She's rotten through and through. The less she's man-hauled and moved the better. If you do as you said you wanted, and keep her for exhibition purposes, you'll have to put an entire new skin inside her, build a new ship, in fact, inside of the old one. She's worm-eaten like a sieve. She'll have to be supported with slings, on pontoons, all the way along, and any towing that's done will have to be by lines on the pontoons. There isn't a bit of timber aboard her that you couldn't push your finger through. This isn't a salvage job, Mr. Chapitt, it's digging up a ship's mummy."

The salvage chief went back to the "Admiral." His engineer's report was disturbing.

"You're sure about that storm coming?" he asked.

"No one but a fool would say he was sure of

anything at sea," the old wrecker retorted. "But I'm sure enough to order my gang back to Nassau. How about yer men?"

"You know these waters, Admiral Voley," returned Chapitt, pleasantly. "I'll be guided by you."

Then he talked over the engineer's proposal of building the coffer-dam, in pieces, in a sheltered harbor.

The wrecker's countenance cleared. He felt that he had scored over his new partner.

"There's a land-locked sandy cove on the lee side o' Little Caicos," he said, "where ye could do any work o' that sort, no matter how hard she blows. But the channel's narrow, tricky an' dangerous. If ye want to supervise the work yerself and run the *Humming-bird* in there, I'll take the wheel myself, if ye've no objection.

"Son Jerry can take the *Moray* in, towin' the barges wi' the timber. He's been there before. But the *Mastodon,* your dumping scows an' the pontoons had better go to Salt Cay, in the Turks Islands. There's a first-class harbor there. I can give ye a pilot for the *Mastodon,* if ye want one."

"I'll leave the entire arrangements in your

hands," Chapitt agreed. "But tell me, how much time do you think we have before the gale comes?"

"We'd ought to be away from here, sure, afore this time to-morrow," answered the old wrecker.

"That's plenty," said the New Yorker, and went back to his chief engineer to direct him to take the exact measurements of the *St. Jago,* as agreed.

By that night the barometer began to show slight signs of "pumping," moving up and down in short jerks, but, on the whole, rising rather than falling. The *Molly Day,* the *Rose* and the other schooners set sail that night, for there was a danger of being caught in the calm which often comes the day before a hurricane. The *Mastodon,* with Cæsar on board as pilot, and with the pontoons and dumping-scows in tow, started for Salt Cay.

Darkness fell, but the engineers and two expert divers who had remained, had not yet finished their work of measurement.

At the earliest break of dawn they returned to their under-water work, under urgent orders to hurry, and, a couple of hours later, everything was ready.

There was, as yet, no sure sign of the approaching hurricane but a long oily swell. The birds were flying low, crying harshly. The barometer had begun to creep downwards, very gradually. The "Admiral" was obviously getting uneasy. He had been aboard the *Humming-bird* since breakfast-time.

The *Moray,* with the barges in tow, led the way. For the swift clipper-built yacht, the tug's pace was lumbering and slow, and the sailing-master of the *Humming-bird,* proud of his ability to pass any vessel he met on the seas, fumed at the idea of tailing along after a wrecking tug. But Chapitt had conceived an enormous regard for the intuition and knowledge of the old wrecker, and the sound seamanship of the son.

The signs of storm now declared themselves openly. Even the hollow resonance of the air—sure sign of a hurricane—pressed heavily upon all on board. A few hours' delay would have been fatal. Chapitt admitted to himself that, had he remained until the barometer gave warning, his fleet might have been caught, certainly with loss of property and possibly with loss of life.

As the *Moray* negotiated the entrance to the

bay—which was absolutely hidden from the sea—Captain Voley ran up a string of signals, telling of the depth found by the leadsman at the shallowest point of the channel. The "Admiral" whistled sharply as he saw the flags.

"How much water do ye draw, right now?" queried the old wrecker.

The sailing-master of the *Humming-bird* answered promptly:

"We've just loaded up with coal and we're fairly deep. Say eleven and a half, maybe twelve feet."

"Son Jerry signals two and a half fathoms (fifteen feet) scant. That's cuttin' it pretty narrow. Ye're sure, positive, that ye don't draw more'n twelve feet?"

"Sure," was the reply. "Under, if anything."

"Single screw, ain't she?"

"Yes, Admiral."

"I don't like it," admitted the old wrecker. "Takin' a craft like this here over a ridge o' rocks sharper'n sharks' teeth with only three feet of water under her bottom is plumb perilous."

Chapitt answered with nonchalance.

"With you at the wheel, I wouldn't care if there was only three inches under her."

The "Admiral" just glanced at him.

"Let me have three-quarter speed on her. I don't want to dawdle; she'll have to spin quick. She answers to her helm pretty lively, does she?"

"Very fast."

"She'll need to!"

The yacht put on speed.

The heart of every man on deck was in his mouth as the trim white vessel sped on, for it looked as though the *Humming-bird* were going to sure destruction. The old wrecker gripped the wheel, his trembling hands steady, his age-bleared eyes keen again. Straight for a black rock, around which the surf was creaming, she headed, and, for a moment, the sailing-master wondered if the offer of help was but a ruse and the old wrecker was going to crash the yacht of his rival to disaster.

But, just as the thought formed itself in his mind, the wheel spun over, the *Humming-bird* pirouetted so close to the rock that the spray flicked the men aboard as she slipped by and shot into a land-locked bay. Five minutes after, the yacht was anchored in waters as smooth and calm as those of a lake on a still day.

That night the hurricane crashed upon them,

but so sheltered was the cove that the *Moray* and the *Humming-bird* each rode to a single anchor. Except for a few hours, the following morning, when the blow was at its greatest height, work was not delayed, and the wreck-carpenters had no trouble in putting together the sides of the coffer-dam according to the measurements of the engineers. The sea was still rough, but, a week later, it had calmed down sufficiently for the two sections to be towed to the sand-bank beside which the *St. Jago* lay. The *Mastodon* had reached there the day before, and had pumped away, anew, the sand which had drifted about the sunken galleon during the storm.

The weather was now calm and fine, and, with all hands at work, the coffer-dam was bolted rapidly to the galleon's side. Wreck-mat tarpaulin was nailed over the entire vessel, forming practically a new outside skin. A few short timbers had been put in the interior of the galleon, bracing her from knee to knee, and at last the engineer reported that he thought it was safe to try to lift.

At nine o'clock the next morning the pumps began work. The *St. Jago,* though considered a large ship in Columbus' time, was small com-

pared to the vessels of to-day, and the space inside the coffer-dam was not great. Less than twenty minutes sufficed to empty it. The pipes were dropped into the galleon's hold.

Then the real test began. With the pumps working at quarter speed, the water in the *St. Jago* began to leave her. She righted, and lifted slightly.

This was the moment for which the divers had been waiting. With all haste, wide slings of reinforced canvas were passed beneath the galleon and lashed to pontoons on either side. The pontoons were then partly pumped empty of water, thus raising the *St. Jago* on the slings, so as to avoid any weight at all coming on the rotten timbers. At the same time, part of the water in the galleon's hold was pumped out. Fearful lest any sudden strain might jolt to pieces this mere shell of a ship, the utmost care was used to equalize the pressure at every point.

Slowly, an inch at a time, the *St. Jago* rose to the surface, not in her old-time glory, as Latimer had seen her in the apparition of a couple of weeks before, but covered in black tarpaulin, rotten, crumbling, encrusted with barnacles and sea-growths, and shining with slime.

With the ancient treasure-ship borne up on these slings, the pontoons were lashed together and tow-lines of great length—to equalize the drag—attached to them. Then, at slow speed, over a calm sea, the *Moray* towed the *St. Jago* to a smoothly shelving beach on an uninhabited islet. There, at high tide, she was gently stranded. The retreating tide left her high and dry.

Then came a tense moment of excitement—the boarding of the craft and the first hunt for the treasure.

What would be found?

The three Voleys, Chapitt, Mark Hoveller, the chief engineer, and Cæsar were the first to board the galleon. They moved with exceeding caution, for, in many places, the planks of the deck were not strong enough to bear their weight. They reached the castellated poop, mounted on a ladder-like series of steps with the utmost precaution, and reached the cabins.

There was no need to break open locks. The metal fastenings broke away from the wood at a touch.

Here and there, when made of harder woods, some parts were solid still. The stairway down to the captain's cabin, made of solid mahogany,

was little rotted. The walnut panelling, though iridescent with decay, had not fallen in. Many of the decorations and scroll-work on the walls, covered with pure gold-leaf, gleamed almost as if they were new. Some of the larger beams showed glassy and agate-like, partly petrified by the flint in the sea-sand. Other parts of the woodwork were dank and foul. A stale stench mingled with the odor of seaweed.

They came at last to an iron-wood chest in one of the cabins, possibly that of the treasurer. Chapitt stooped to open it, then drew back.

"No," he said, "the youngest first! Latimer, close your eyes, open the box, and bring out the first thing you find!"

His heart beating rapidly with excitement, the boy shut his eyes, lifted the lid of the chest, and plunged his hand into something that felt like a mass of feathers—royal feather-cloaks, as he rightly guessed. Then he touched something hard!

He drew it out, and a shout of triumph came from his six companions. The boy opened his eyes and gazed at the prize.

It was the nugget of Ana-Caona, the martyred Indian chieftainess!

CHAPTER XII

TORPEDOED BILLIONS

THE treasure of the *St. Jago* did not prove so large as had been expected. Moreover, after nearly two years' litigation, the courts granted the claims of the Spanish Crown to a large part of the treasure. Yet the remainder was enough to make the Voleys rich and to enable Mark Hoveller to go back to the United States and retire from the sea.

So far as Latimer was concerned, his share of the treasure permitted him to fulfil his dearest ambition—that of entering and graduating from the Massachusetts " Tech." Then he spent a year abroad, visiting big salvage companies in England, France, Germany and Holland, and witnessing many salvage operations. When the World War broke out, Latimer, as a trained specialist in under-sea operations, volunteered at once, and was made assistant constructor in the building of submarine defenses at various Allied ports.

The war over at last, Latimer, a boy no longer, returned to his birthplace, the Bahama Islands.

Alas! The sturdy figure of the old wrecker was no longer there to greet him. The "Admiral" had reached that anchorage which no craft ever leaves.

The old *Moray* was gone, too, worn out by years of faithful service. There was a new *Moray,* a much more powerful and modern vessel. None the less, Latimer grieved over the laying up of the old craft, on which, in his boyhood, he had dreamed so many dreams, where he had helped in the rescue of the *Ocean Fay,* from which he had dived to the spell-ridden pirate hulk near Ghost Island, and on which he had shared in the never-to-be-forgotten raising of the *St. Jago.*

But, though the old "Admiral" and the old *Moray* were no more, the Voley name was not less honored than of old. Latimer's father, Captain Jerry Voley, partner in the great wrecking firm of Chapitt & Voley, was more active than ever. He had charge of all the wrecking operations of the firm south of Cape Hatteras. More, owing to the fact that Old Man Chapitt was over seventy years of age, Captain Jerry, though the

junior partner, was constantly summoned to New York, and was practically the general manager of the business.

None of the treasure-money of the *St. Jago de Almazora* had been wasted—at least, none of it which had passed into the finders' hands. These millions, wrung from the Arawak and Carib Indians by the barbarous Bobadilla and the scarcely less ruthless Ovando, had gone to establish finely equipped wrecking stations at every important point along the North and South American shore.

"Salvage companies," Jerry Voley had once declared, "are not only to ship-owners what insurance companies are to individuals and businesses on land. They fulfil a higher function. They are the rescuers of all ships in distress, wherever they may be, without regard to size, value or registry.

"Now that there is wireless equipment on board almost every large vessel, and certainly on every one that carries passengers, and such vessels, if in any danger, can communicate instantly with powerful and swift ocean tugs in nearly every port, the perils of the sea are diminishing. To my knowledge, more than three thousand

lives and a quarter of a billion dollars' worth of property have been saved since the partnership of Chapitt & Voley was formed, ten years ago."

It was to work of this kind that Latimer returned after the war, work as greatly above the mere salvage of cargoes, as in the days of the earlier *Moray,* as that had been above the semi-piratic operations of the Black Fleet and the Key Westers of the middle of the century before.

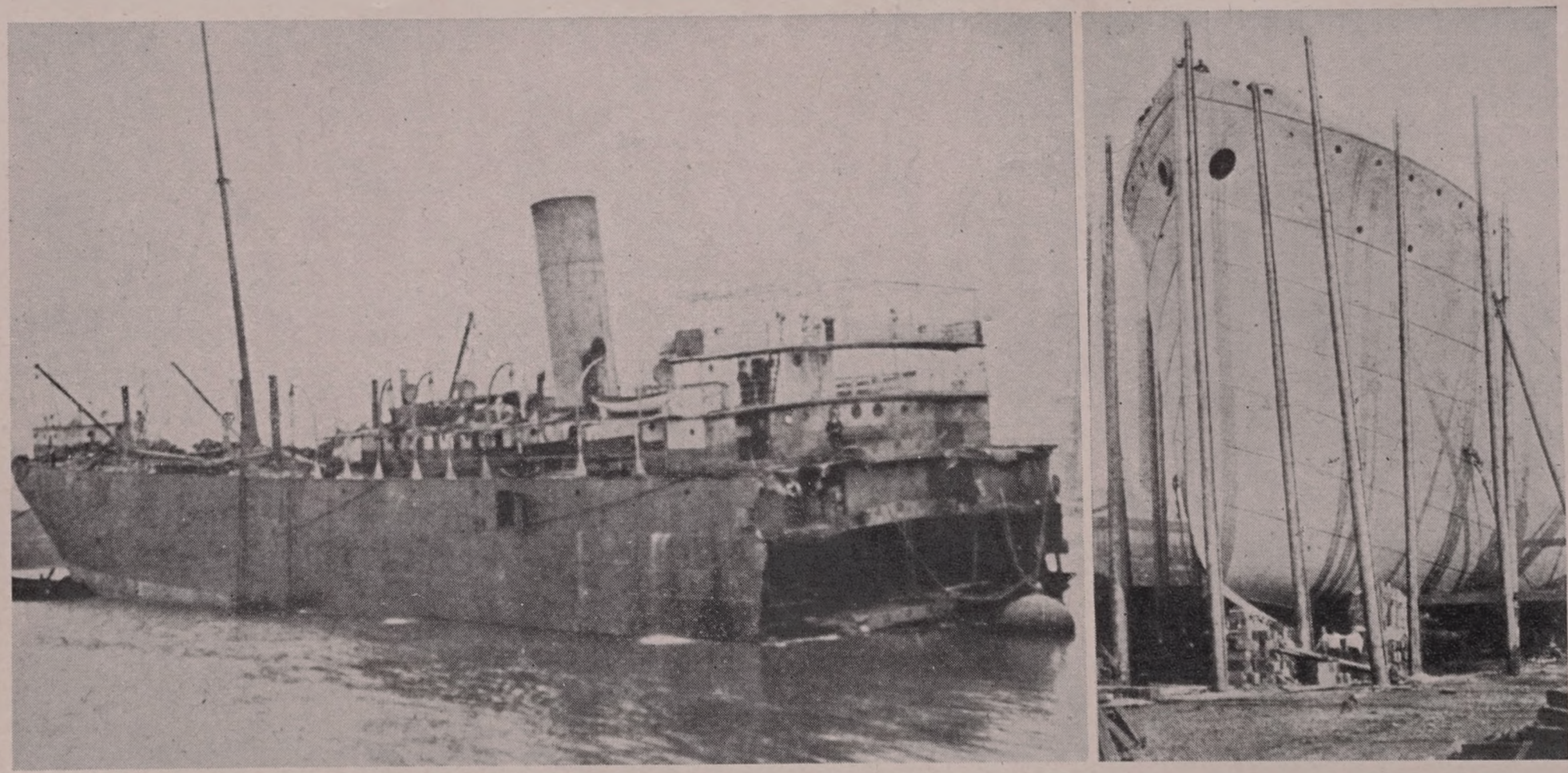
The first period of wrecking, which was more knavish than helpful, ended with the close of the Civil War. During the second period, from 1866 to 1898, salvage operations were confined mainly to a saving of the cargo, or of freeing vessels which had run aground; there was comparatively little effort made to raise any save the lightest vessels from the sea-bottom.

The third, or modern period, began with the efforts made by American divers to recover and raise some of the Spanish cruisers sunk in the engagement at Santiago, Cuba, during the Spanish-American War, in July, 1898. The *Maria Theresa* was the first cruiser raised, but, heavy weather coming up soon after she was lifted, the wrecking company was unable to maintain the

struggle, and the ill-fated cruiser sank a second time, on her way to an American port.

The recovery of the Spanish cruiser *Reina Mercedes* marks the first of the successful war-ship salvage feats of the new era. Work was begun on her on January 2, 1899, and on March 1st she was towed into Santiago Harbor. She had lain in over eight fathoms of water, twenty-six feet at the bow and forty-two feet at the stern. A coffer-dam was built. Pneumatic tools of American invention were used for drilling holes in the battleship's plates, under water. The work was done with extreme thoroughness, and when the *Reina Mercedes* was raised, she could have kept down the water from her leaks with her own pumps.

One of the ever-famous salvage cases of this period was that of the steamer *Milwaukee,* which, while on a voyage from Newcastle-on-Tyne to New Orleans, taking the northern route, went ashore near Aberdeen. The wreck lay in a most curious position, probably the only one of its kind in salvage history. A large rock had penetrated the bottom of her forehold to a height of eight feet above her tank top, making it absolutely impossible to get her off entire.

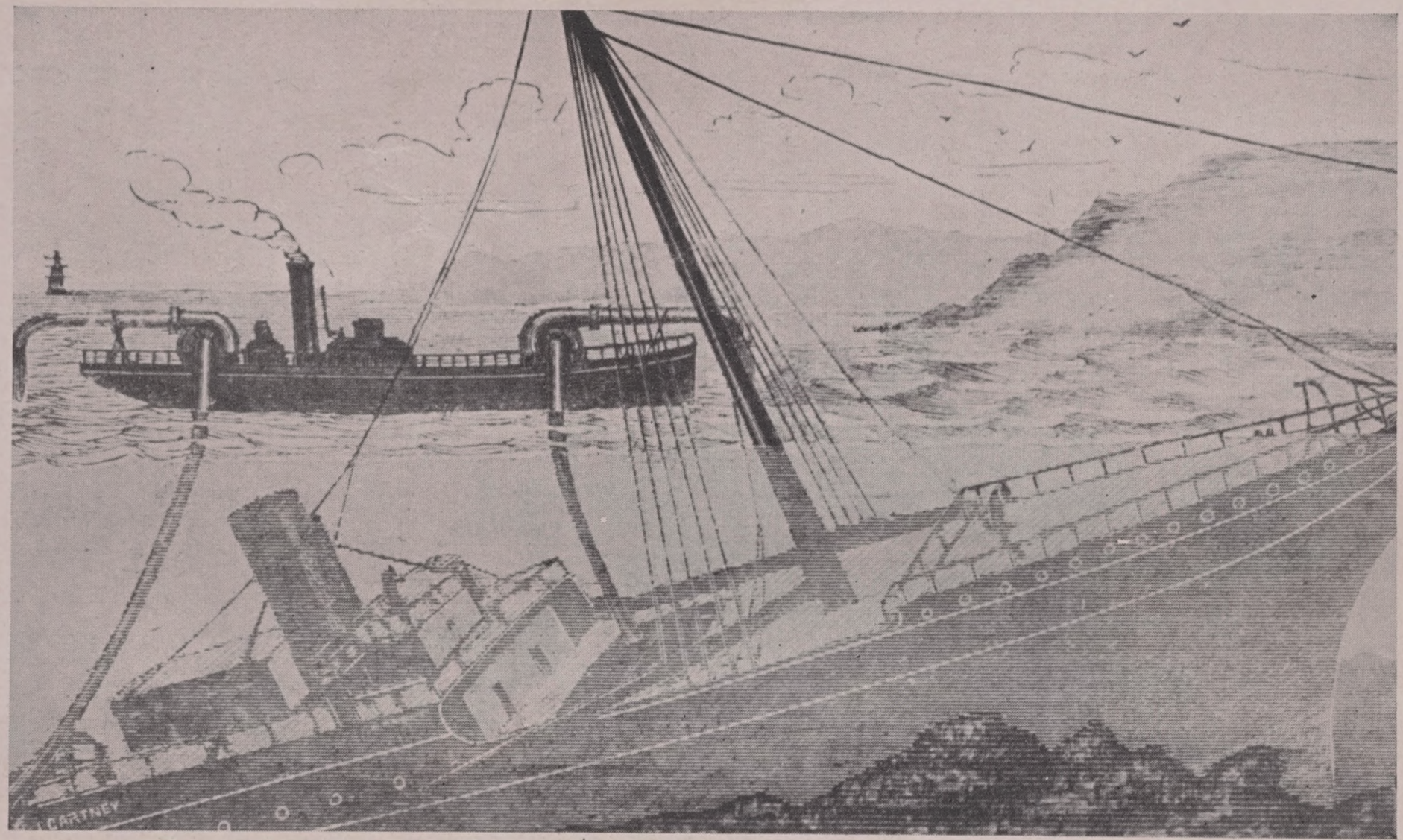


Courtesy of Engineering Magazine.

A Famous Case of Salvage

Steamer *Milwaukee*, her bow shattered by rocks, cut in half by hundreds of small dynamite charges, and the stern saved.

The new bow of the *Milwaukee*, ready to be forged on to the old stern. The operation was successful.



PUMPING OUT THE WATER.

After the divers have patched the holes in a ship's side, sometimes she can be floated by her own buoyancy. Such pumps can throw 40,000 gallons an hour and thus overcome such small leaks as may remain.

As, however, the steamer was afloat from the main bulkhead aft, and her machinery was all in this section, it was decided to save this portion. In order to do this, the steamer had to be cut in two. Very small cartridges of dynamite were fixed to her hull and heft around her bottom, just forward of the bulkhead, and small explosions, one after the other along the line thus marked out, gradually cut her in two. The job was a most delicate one, as the charges of dynamite had to be powerful enough to rend the plates asunder without injuring the bulkhead. If the latter were jarred sufficiently to start even a small leak, the remainder of the vessel would have to be abandoned. The explosions, small but powerful, continued incessantly for ten days, and five hundred pounds of dynamite were used. The front half of the *Milwaukee* was left sticking on the rock, the after half was towed to port, stern foremost, where a new bow was built and launched. Then the two pieces were welded together and the *Milwaukee,* with a new bow and an old stern, continued her ocean career.

A somewhat different case of a vessel impaled on a rock was that of the American liner *Paris,* which stranded on the Manacles, one of the most

famous of all the danger points in the English Channel. There was a good deal of comment, at the time, as to how she got there. It had been supposed that her compasses must have been deflected in some way, but wreckers found them in perfect condition. However she got on the rocks, there she was! A British wrecking company worked for some time trying to get her off, and then abandoned the attempt after having lost a large sum of money in fruitless endeavor.

A German wrecking company, then, asked to be allowed to attempt salvage. Divers made a very thorough inspection of the wreck and found that a hole about twelve by sixteen feet in size had been punched in the vessel's bottom about amidships. Pinnacles of granite protruded far into the ship. The efforts of the British company had been in vain, for they had not taken time enough to discover the exact conditions.

The vessel rested, practically, on a great pivot of granite, and the more powerful were the efforts made to tow her off, the larger would be the rip in her steel plates. She lay far too high for pontoons to be of any immediate use, and the weight of the enormous liner, in any case, would

have required a very great number of specially built pontoons of large size.

The first obstacle encountered by the German divers was a lush tangle of seaweed, growing in a thicket as dense as a tropical jungle and fully ten feet high. It had been this growth which had prevented the English divers from discovering the exact condition of the *Paris*. The first task was the cutting away of the greater part of this weed, an arduous piece of work, for the seaweed grew from a bottom of jagged rock and, of course, it is difficult to get the sweep of a cutting tool in the water. Special scythe-blades were fitted to iron handles and weighted. It was a curious sight to see divers, in their great goggle-eyed globular helmets, painfully swinging scythes as though they were hay-makers working in a meadow.

This much accomplished, and the actual conditions revealed, the Germans did not try to move the *Paris* off the rocks. They undertook to move away the rocks from under the liner. The granite pinnacles, of excessively hard stone, wore out the points of the drills with exasperating speed, but new points were provided and the work was not allowed to stop. Enormous

charges of a specially powerful explosive were used which, indeed, blasted away the rock, little by little, but also racked the midship section of the *Paris* seriously.

Weather in the English Channel is rarely favorable for wrecking operations—even in summer—for many days together. No less than three separate times, bad gales flooded the liner anew and drove her back on the rocks, but persistent work, night and day, enabled the wreckers to keep her from getting hung up badly. In about two months' time the *Paris* was floated, the hole in her side patched and she was towed into Plymouth for permanent repairs.

Time is always an important consideration. Many a vessel can be salvaged if the owners get in touch with a wrecking company with all speed, and if the wreckers hasten to the spot.

The loss of the *Assyrian,* of the Elder-Dempster Line, was an example of the neglect of this. The liner grounded on the rocks at Cape Race, Newfoundland, and, as she was not badly pinned, the agents of the line at Quebec took up the matter of salvage with several different firms of salvers corresponding first with one, then with another, in the endeavor to secure the lowest pos-

sible price. At the end of a week, by competitive methods, they succeeded in getting the original price offered to them cut to one-half, and the owners chuckled at their business acumen. But, when the salvers got to Cape Race, the vessel was gone. Ship and cargo, valued together at over $600,000, had gone down in the night, and being beyond the powers of salvage, were a total loss.

Nor is it to be thought that wrecks always occur on lonely reefs at sea or desolate promontories of the land. Many terrible wrecks have occurred—with great loss of life—even in harbor. Still stranger, great ocean liners have sunk while moored to wharves in a seaport. A notable case of this was the *St. Paul,* a 13,000-ton liner which rolled over on one side and sank in the mud while moored to her pier in New York City. The cause of her sinking is still unexplained.

The case was an extraordinary one. The *St. Paul* rolled over quite suddenly. She sank fourteen feet deep in the mud, lying on her side, and over 2,000 tons of mud seeped into the vessel, adding immensely to the difficulties of raising her. Owing to her position, cramped in beside

the pier, coffer-dam work could not be built on both sides, nor, because of the weight and character of the mud, could it be pumped away. The great Merritt and Chapman Wrecking Company of New York had to invent an entirely new procedure in the case.

A series of twenty-one timber and steel A-frames were erected on the starboard or exposed side of the vessel. Wire tackles were fastened to these and anchored to ten-ton blocks of concrete which were constructed on the next adjacent pier down-stream. A total pull of 840 tons with 100-foot leverage was obtained with these tackles. A further direct lift of 1,200 tons was obtained by using four large pontoons attached to chains passed under the port side of the vessel and around the keel.

Before these cables and chains could be passed under the hull it was necessary to dredge. This dredging had to be continued until the divers could get at the port-holes and close them. No easy task this! "By any one familiar with the internal architecture of an ocean liner, with its closely-spaced decks, its numerous bulkheads and partitions, its winding passageways, and narrow and steep staircases in the machinery and

cargo compartments," says the *Engineering News-Record,* "the difficulty of a man in a diving dress making his way through this labyrinth, lying on its side, in muddy water, and finding and closing a number of port-holes (many of them ten feet under the mud) can be appreciated."

It was necessary to cut holes in some of the bulkheads, and, at first, this was done by dynamite, but, while the work was in process, a successful under-water oxy-acetylene torch was perfected. This torch lights at will and cuts almost a foot a minute through half-inch plate at a depth of fifty-four feet. One of the divers' difficulties was the removal of a six-inch gun and ammunition, which was deep under the mud—this was in 1918, before the close of the World War, when liners were armed against submarine attack—and, as this gun had been built into the frame of the ship with the greatest strength, it was hard to remove. The smokestacks and masts were blasted away, to make it easier to roll the giant craft. In spite of every effort to remove the mud, it was not found possible to take out more than 1,000 tons, leaving the same amount in the vessel.

At last the day came for rolling her over as much on an even keel as possible. Waiting until the tide was flowing down river, the direct lift of the wire tackles and that of the pontoons was thrown simultaneously on the craft—a pull of 1,840 tons, in addition to the tide. Six days of such heaving, during the ebb-tide only, brought the vessel to within twenty-five degrees of being on an even keel. Then coffer-dams were built on both sides, four wrecking derrick barges were placed around the *St. Paul* and the work of pumping began. She was raised at last, but the enormous work had occupied nearly four months' time.

All these stories and hundreds of others were familiar to Latimer. Ever since the day when the *St. Jago* was brought to the surface, and her treasure had enabled the lad to become a salvage engineer, he had clipped and collected every article or item he could find which dealt with the salvaging of ships. He did so, still.

"Dad," said Latimer, after he had been home a few days, "what do you think of the idea of trying to get up some of the ships torpedoed during the war?"

"I haven't thought anything about it," re-

plied Captain Voley. "I've had all I could do to attend to my own end of the business. It's a long stretch of coast between Cape Hatteras and Cape Horn. And, some of these days, the United States is going to wake up to the fact that South America is progressive and prosperous. Then there'll be more maritime business down there—and more wrecks. Altogether, I've had seven big jobs of salvage on the South American coast. Four were of German steamers, two of Italian and one of French. Port authorities down that way hardly know what the Stars and Stripes looks like. They never see it on ships of any size, anyway."

"Yet there used to be an American merchant marine!"

"Ay," agreed his father, "there used to be, and one of the best in the world. The Yankee clippers were famous. It was the Yankees, as a matter of fact, who led the way in the new era of shipbuilding. The famous tea-clippers of England, like the *Taeping* and the *Ariel,* were built on American models.

"It's a queer thing about Americans," Captain Voley went on, thoughtfully. "They don't seem able to do much original invention. And

they don't seem able to perfect anything. But they can beat the world when it comes to making big practical adaptations on a rough scale."

"How, Dad!" The boy's tone was a little indignant, for, as a graduate of "Tech," he was an ardent upholder of the United States.

"Well, take merchant ships, for example! The American clipper-built ship was simply the idea of transferring the lines of a British yacht to a large vessel. That wasn't invention, that was adaptation. With that idea, they built up an A No. 1 merchant marine. Then the other nations took up the idea and perfected it, and American shipbuilders fell behind.

"Take warships! Great Britain claims the credit for the first all-big-gun ship and actually has had the nerve to force upon the world the words 'pre-Dreadnought' and 'Dreadnought' to mean ships built before and after that pattern. But, though the *Dreadnought* was the first ship of that type to take the water, American naval designers had advocated the idea long before, and were actually at work on such a craft when the *Dreadnought* was first laid down.

"Take submarines! The first idea was put out by a Frenchman, true enough, but the first submarine that actually worked was an adaptation of French ideas by an American. And where is the United States now in submarine construction? 'Way behind all the other naval nations.

"Take steamships! The first steamboat which actually went up a river was the *Clermont,* built by Fulton, an American, and it was launched on the Hudson River. But what was the *Clermont?* It was simply a rebuilding and combining of two experimental steamboats which Fulton had seen in Scotland and in France. The first actual working steamboat, like the first clipper, was American. Yet German and British shipbuilders have left Americans far in the rear.

"Take aeroplanes! The Wright Brothers adapted a Danish glider and a French improvement of a German gas engine to build the first aeroplane that flew. But the United States Government wouldn't help the Wright Brothers and they had to do all their development in France. What was the result? The United States failed utterly and horribly with her aeroplane building in the war, and, now that the war

is over, several European countries have put aero work on a commercial basis, while America doesn't even attempt it. To-day, the United States buys aeroplanes and dirigibles from foreign countries, and even her postal aerial service is years behind that of Europe."

"Why is that, do you suppose, Dad?"

"Party politics, for one thing, and the domination of the commercial attitude towards life for another," was the terse reply. "It's not the fault of Americans as individuals. Rather it's the systems which have grown up under what seem to me to be two false ideas.

"The first of these is an uncentralized government with an elective system which compels a politician—even the most honest and patriotic—to keep his ear to the ground all the time, lest party opponents in his own section of the country should undermine him. This forces a damaging sectionalism.

"The governmental system of the United States is incredibly wasteful—more wasteful than any royal court ever known in history—not because of the men in it, but because of the system itself. American citizens get less return from the heavy taxes they pay than do the citi-

zens of any other country. With an enormous budget, the United States has no money to spend on experimentation, and has to depend for that on the personal gifts of millionaires.

"This terrific cost of administration may be a good thing in some ways. I don't pretend to know much about internal affairs in the United States. But, so far as sea matters are concerned, it's bad. What does a Senator or a Congressman from a constituency a thousand miles inland know or care about the sea? Moreover, this dependence on the philanthropy of the rich begets a feeling of negligence on the part of Federal and State governments, and this, in turn, causes the people to wonder what governmental benefits they receive, anyway!

"The other thing is the domination of commerce. The trouble is not so much that every American chases the Almighty Dollar, as that he regards this chase as the natural goal of man. The successful business men are regarded as the aristocracy of America. Look at American newspapers! They give in details the personal doings of rich business men. Why? Not to toady to them, at all, but because the American people like to read about them, in the same way that

European newspapers tell of doings in court circles, for the same reason. Commerce is not the king of America, but it is the king-maker.

"Because of that, by means of immoderate advertising, trade propaganda and various other fictitious ways, every effort is made to 'raise the standard of living.' This, Lat, if you reduce it to its barest terms, is merely another way of saying that the people must be taught to buy more and spend more.

"In order to meet this high rate of spending, it is necessary to have a high rate of wages. That works all right, perhaps, in a great many inland matters—I'm not an expert in these and so can't say—but it's fatal, absolutely fatal, to any effort to compete with other maritime nations on the sea.

"Look at it for yourself, Lat. If it costs more to build a ship in the United States and more to equip her, it stands to reason that a vessel has got to earn more, in order to yield fair dividends to her owners, than one which has cost less to build. Then, if it costs more to coal and provision her, if her taxes are higher, if she has to pay bigger wages to an American crew than is paid to sailors under any other flag, it is clear

that her daily overhead expense is considerably bigger.

"In order to try to break even at all, she has to charge a higher freight rate than competing bottoms. Naturally, shippers choose the vessel with the lowest freight charges. American steamers can't meet their expenses if they charge the same rates as ships of other countries, and so they have to go out of business."

"But I thought, Dad, that the United States Government subsidized her merchant marine!"

"To a certain extent, she does, but not enough to make up the difference. And if she did subsidize it to this extent, it would be the government that was losing money. The deficit would have to be made up by taxation. That would mean, simply, that farmers in Iowa, cotton-growers in Louisiana or stock-raisers in Montana would have to pay out of their pockets to enrich ship-owners in Massachusetts or California. As things stand now, the United States is on a lee shore when it comes to competition on the open sea.

"I happen to know this," he continued, "because we're face to face with the same condition in salvage. I can handle my affairs much more

cheaply from Nassau than from Key West. Still, the Chapitt & Voley Company is largely American and we try to be as American as we can. But wrecking tugs built in American shipyards are more costly than if we got them from Glasgow or Stockholm, American equipment is higher in price than that of Europe, and our wrecking crews get almost twice as much money as crews on the other side of the Atlantic. Therefore, our charges have to be higher.

"In the salvage business, though, as you know, time is a prime consideration. A day or two of delay may make an enormous difference. Therefore, an American company, with wrecking headquarters at Boston, New York, Wilmington, Norfolk, Beaufort, Nassau and Galveston has a strangle-hold on American salvage business. There are other good companies besides ours, but we've got the coast pretty well covered.

"When it comes to the question of raising torpedoed ships, however, our American overhead expense would be against us. Isn't most of the big stuff around the British coasts?"

"Yes, Dad," Latimer agreed, "but there's such a lot of it to be done that British salvers

can't do it all. And they can't trust the Germans. They've tried that, but German divers, under English pay, were found to be engaged in still further damaging the ships they were sent down to repair. Every salvage company in the world could find work in British seas, now.

"You see, Dad, one-quarter of the whole world's shipping was sent to the bottom of the ocean by German mines and submarines. The official figures are 15,053,786 tons. Before the war, when labor costs were low and steel was cheap, it cost about $75 a ton to build a vessel in Europe. The American merchant fleet, as built during the war, cost nearly $200 a gross ton. Warships, of course, cost a great deal more in proportion. Counting cargoes, it would be safe to say that during the war at least five billion dollars' worth of shipping went to the bottom, or more than all the treasure-ships ever since gold was first discovered in America.

"As Kaempffert said to me once, 'Sunken treasure has been a lure to man ever since oars first dipped in the water or wind swelled a sail, but what shall be said of treasure that is measured, not by paltry millions, but by magnificent intoxicating billions!

"'Is it forever to lie in the mud and sand and to corrode and dissolve under the lapse of time, or will the covetous, venturesome, romantic spirits of two hemispheres strive to raise it with all the wonderful technical resources of our engineering age? The world, too, is crying out for the cargoes of these sunken vessels, for, with the industrial halt that the war has produced and with the famines that the war has left in its wake, the contents of those vessels—when not spoiled—would command an enormous price.'"

"That's all very well," objected Captain Voley, "but, after all, for a salvage company, it's a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence, or, if you like it better, of dollars and cents. Have you got your eye on any special piece of work?"

"There's the *Gargantic*, Dad!"

"You haven't any notion of tackling that, have you?"

"Young Chapitt and I were talking over it, when I was in London. We thought it could be done. Her hull's worth a good two millions, and a big part of her cargo is copper ingots from the Western States which was on its way to England for munition manufacturers. Copper doesn't rust or spoil."

Captain Voley shrugged his shoulders.

"Where does she lie?" he asked.

"Between Bull Rocks and Dursey Island at the entrance to Bantry Bay, on the southwest corner of Ireland. She's in about twenty-seven fathoms of water, on a rocky bottom.

"Her crew got to land safely, and the captain reported that she had struck a mine, and gone down by the head. She floated for fifteen minutes, after striking, so that the hole can't be beyond patching. The captain said that he thought he could have brought her into port, but that the plates of the fore bulkhead had been so spread apart by the shock that he couldn't shore it up and stop the leak."

"What did you want to do, Lat? Build a coffer-dam 162 feet high?"

"No, Dad. I thought we could raise her with pontoons, on a straight lift."

"But the *Gargantic* must be of nine or ten thousand tons register!"

"Over ten."

"And two thousand is regarded as about the limit. And she's loaded with copper! You're mad, Lat!"

"There's no reason why there should be any

limit to pontoons," was the retort. "We're only beginning to develop modern salvage, Dad. I thought of using these new vertical pontoons. The water's deep enough to use them to advantage. They'd have to be big, of course, bigger than anything ever yet built. Each one would be self-contained, with its own pumping machinery gasoline-driven.

"I got estimates on these. The lowest bid I got was from Sweden. They'll cost, at present prices, $9,000 apiece at the shipyard, and, as you know, Swedish steel is good quality."

"And how many do you reckon you'll need—one or two?"

"Forty. See here, Dad," and, taking pencil and note-book from his pocket, Latimer proceeded to figure out and design with a great deal of technical detail, the cubic capacity of these vertical pontoons, their lifting power, and the dead weight of the *Gargantic* and her cargo at the pressure depth of twenty-seven fathoms. "Thirty-four or thirty-five of these huge pontoons ought to do it, you see," he concluded, "but with forty of them, she ought to come up, easy."

"Perhaps." Captain Voley's tone was un-

convinced. "Even so, that's $360,000 cash outlay."

"We'll get that back. I've seen the owners. They offered to pay $750,000 flat for the *Gargantic* and her cargo, when towed into Queenstown Harbor, in sufficiently good shape for the cargo to be unloaded into lighters and for the ship herself to be dry-docked."

"Well they might!" commented the salver, who felt, himself, that he could have got more, had he been in charge of the negotiations.

"Even so, Dad, if we allow $150,000 for the actual work and $360,000 for the pontoons, we'd make nearly a quarter of a million profit, over and above the investment, and have the pontoons ready to tackle another job."

"And what did you expect me to do?"

"Back the scheme," answered Latimer. "The Swedish shipbuilders said they'd accept half the money down, and the rest on three months' and six months' notes of the Chapitt & Voley Company. That way, we wouldn't have to pay out all the money until we got the salvage price from the owners of the *Gargantic.*"

"If you raise her!"

"We will!"

Captain Voley thought for a moment and then shook his head.

"No, Lat," he answered, "I can't agree to that. Old Man Chapitt leaves practically everything in my hands, and half a million dollars at a single crack is too big a speculation for me to tackle. If our name goes back of you, we'd have to carry through, even if we lost money, in order to keep up the reputation of the firm. I wouldn't be justified in risking possible bankruptcy by a hazardous investment that would certainly be not less than half a million and might easily reach to double that sum, in case of unexpected trouble.

"Better give up the idea, Latimer. There's plenty to be done in the regular way of salvage along these coasts, and there's charge of the Beaufort station awaiting you, whenever you want to take it. It's better business to tackle only the jobs which are tolerably sure to bring in a profit, even if a small one, and, that way, you can keep on the right side of the ledger all the time."

Latimer frowned. Since his boyhood he had dreamed of the big things. At "Tech," he had met young fellows as his classmates, who since had become the engineers of mighty

projects. The World War had shown him European nations engaged in ventures on a colossal scale. The daring of his grandfather, the old wrecker, was in his veins, though in modernized form. This idea of doing things quietly and surely struck him as "Bahaman and local." It seemed to throw him back to things familiar in his childhood.

"What's my interest in the firm worth?" he queried abruptly.

Captain Voley raised his eyebrows. This was unexpected, and displeasing.

"So you're willing to sell out and quit the firm!" he exclaimed. "I didn't think that of you, Lat!"

"I can't be pinned down to crawling around the coast, picking up a schooner or a tramp steamer here and there, when there's really big work waiting to be done," the young fellow burst out. "I don't want to settle down and be a piker all my life! Think of the opportunities, Dad! And then to say that the Chapitt & Voley people didn't have the nerve to go in!"

The obstinate out-thrust of the chin reminded Captain Voley of the lad's grandfather. When the "Admiral" had assumed that expression,

there was nothing to be said. It was better, thought the salver, to let the young engineer have a taste of his own foolishness than to risk the reputation of the firm.

"I suppose," he answered slowly, "your interest in the firm is worth about $400,000. That is, I know a Key West man who would buy out your interest for that sum."

"And young Chapitt agreed to put in just as much as I could get!"

"Have you that in writing?"

"Yes, Dad. And I've the contract with the *Gargantic* owners in writing, too, and the Swedish estimates."

"Are you sure, Latimer," demanded his father, seriously, "that you want me to sell out your share of the Chapitt & Voley firm? I warn you, if you do, you'll have trouble in buying it back!"

Latimer hesitated. He saw how keenly his father felt this desertion and hated to disappoint him. Yet his purpose remained firm.

"Dad," he asked, "could you arrange the deal so that I could capitalize my share for $400,000 with the option of buying it back with ten per cent. interest in six months' time? I'm sure I

can get up the *Gargantic!* And ten per cent. for six months is big interest for any one who wants to make the investment."

"Yes," agreed the other, "I think I could do that. This Key West man is a big banker, and if I endorsed the paper, it would be accepted. The assets of the Chapitt & Voley firm, now, are valued at over two million dollars."

"Then do it, Dad! I'll be back in six months from to-day with the money, and the interest, and a fortune besides!"

That very afternoon, he cabled to the Swedish shipbuilding company to begin work on the pontoons.

Despite the utmost dispatch, three months passed in the preliminary work. Young Chapitt had put in his share of $400,000 as agreed upon, and since the Chapitt & Voley firm had absolutely forbidden that their name should be associated with the work, the two young fellows organized and incorporated themselves as the "Gargantic Salvage Company."

It had been decided to increase the number of pontoons to forty-eight, lest there should be an under-calculation at any point, or some unknown suction from an undercurrent, and the two

young partners had gathered divers and wrecking equipment from various British companies.

As the *Gargantic* was lying on a rocky bottom, there had been no great difficulty in passing the huge wire cables under her. At a few points, parts of the rock had been blasted out under her keel. Meantime, while the pontoons were being built, the fore bulkhead of the great steamer had been shored and patched by divers, and, despite the enormous depth at which the men had to work, almost a complete new temporary bow had been built.

Notwithstanding their optimism, the two partners were beginning to look blue. They had expected to spend $150,000 in work additional to the purchase of the pontoons. They had already expended $250,000 in under-water operations, before the pontoons arrived, and, having raised the number to forty-eight, the Swedish bill was $432,000.

Even if they should succeed without a hitch, the payment from the owners of the *Gargantic* would leave them but a small margin. This margin, moreover, would be wiped out in the actual work of raising and towing. More than once

Latimer thought of his father's warning, but choked back the feeling of regret.

A few days before the crucial test, the *Humming-bird* sped up to the site of operations near Dursey Island. Captain Voley was aboard, but disclaimed any intention of interfering in the work.

"I've had a bit more experience than you youngsters," he said, "and in salvage work, almost anything is apt to happen."

Latimer was delighted to have his father there, but, at the same time, it made him all the more nervous. Captain Voley stuck to his word, and, when the entire system of operations had been laid before him, he made no comment, whatever might be his thoughts.

At last came the great day. The pontoons were all affixed, the cables adjusted to the exact length, and the pumping began.

Latimer and young Chapitt, each with a telephone receiver clamped over his ears, awaited with keenest anxiety the reports from the divers on the sea-bottom, who were in communication with them by submarine telephone.

"She's righting!" came the first welcome news.

Two minutes' wait—two long anxious minutes —then:

"Her bow's lifting!"

And, almost immediately after, a simultaneous warning from the two divers stationed below, one on each side of the wreck:

"Stern sagging! More lift on the stern!"

This was menacing, for everything depended on the weight being equalized.

Frantically Latimer signalled to the pontoons at the stern to keep the pumps going at full speed, and to the pontoons near the bow to stop pumping.

Would she rise or slide back?

Came from the deep, the cry:

"She lifts!"

With a simultaneous impulse, the two young partners clasped hands. Unless something happened, all was well now, for every inch the sunken steamer rose, the less was the weight of water pressing upon her.

Slowly the pontoons lifted, until the *Gargantic* was five feet off the bottom. Then there was a halt, while the divers examined every cable-sling and made sure that the great steamship was on an absolutely even keel.

The signal to pump was given again, until the top of the steamer's mast appeared above water, to be greeted with a triumphant shout. Success seemed assured.

There was a temptation, then, to set the force-pumps at work, and try whether the *Gargantic* could rise by her own buoyancy, but, especially with his father there, Latimer played safe. The steamer was towed to a flat shoal, which had been picked out a month before, and there stranded lightly as the tide went down. The slack of the cables was taken up on the huge vertical pontoons, and, as the tide rose, the *Gargantic* floated anew.

The pumps resumed their work.

Slowly the great steamer rose from her three years' exile under the sea. At last her funnel appeared.

The wrecking steamer was then towed across her stern—her sides were encircled by the ring of pontoons—and the great improved Drysdale pumps commenced to pour out their floods of water.

The monster vessel answered gallantly. Her ventilators showed above their surface, and then her decks came awash, the pontoons, meanwhile,

keeping the slings taut to keep them from slipping.

So well had the divers done their work below water, and so completely had everything been safeguarded that modern engineering skill could devise, that from the moment the decks of the *Gargantic* became awash, the wrecking steamer nosing her stern, the hull held buoyancy.

The sky, however, had clouded. Fitful gusts were rising. The sea was choppy and slate-colored. Queenstown Harbor was several hours' towage away.

But Latimer, who had spared no expense, had hired the largest wrecking tug to be found in Liverpool, a Leviathan of tugs, big enough to be able to tow even so heavy a load as the *Gargantic* at six-knot speed.

It was well that he had done so.

As tug and tow entered Queenstown Harbor and passed Spike and Haulbowline Islands, the gale broke with fury and the sea rose high, as though vengeful at having been compelled to disgorge its prey.

Then came a wild orgy of unloading, night and day work, for every hour that the pumps clanked and the wrecking crew stood by, cost

many a hundred dollars, and the fore bulkhead, while it held, was not to be trusted. The temporary bow, too, looked flimsy and uncertain. Yet, by strenuous efforts and the aid of every man that could be brought from shore, the huge craft was unloaded in two days and two nights, and towed into dry dock.

At last Latimer could breathe a sigh of relief. The great job was done.

Aboard the *Humming-bird,* that night, Captain Voley and the two young partners went over the financial situation.

"How much has it cost you?" the salvage chief asked.

Ruefully, Latimer and young Chapitt brought out their account books.

They read—$910,000!

"And you're to get $750,000 for the job?"

"We've got the pontoons, Dad."

"Ay, and they cost you $9,000 apiece. Besides, Latimer, you haven't figured the ten per cent. interest on your $400,000. That makes a cost of $950,000 in all."

"But we can re-sell the pontoons, sir."

"Whom to? Ships like the *Gargantic* aren't raised every day! But I'm willing to talk busi-

ness with you, at that. That is, the Chapitt & Voley Company is willing to talk business with the Gargantic Salvage Company. You paid $9,000 apiece for those pontoons. It was too much! I could have got them cheaper than that. I could have told you at the time, but you wanted to go ahead in your own way. They're worth about $8,000. I'll buy them, from you, second-hand, for $7,500."

"All of them?"

"No. I'll buy thirty of them. As your books stand, you show a deficit of $200,000. If I buy thirty pontoons at $225,000, that will clear your expenses, give you $25,000 cash for your six months' work between you, and let you have eighteen pontoons left. If you can sell these for $100,000 you'll have made a fair profit on your transaction. Or, if you prefer, you can pay your interest, and renew your loan. Then you can continue with your own company and keep the pontoons for yourself."

Latimer turned to his father.

"Dad!" he exclaimed. "Haven't we made good? Haven't we done the biggest piece of salvage that's been done since the war? And haven't we—on your figures—cleared $125,000

in six months on an investment of $800,000? Isn't that good business—seventeen per cent. on the investment?"

"It is," replied Captain Voley, "I don't deny it. But what would have happened to you, if you'd been half a day later getting into harbor, or if the gale had been half a day earlier?"

"That was part of the risk we ran. But we got away with it! I've heard you say, yourself, that in salvage, it's the results that count. We've done what we set out to do, haven't we?"

"Yes."

"Then," protested the young engineer, "why don't you, in the name of the Chapitt & Voley Company, take us in as a subsidiary concern, not so that you'll be responsible for our operations, but so that we can work together, the way that Grandfather and Old Man Chapitt worked together on the raising of the *St. Jago?*"

"It might be done," agreed Captain Voley. "But what will you want to tackle next?"

Latimer looked across the table at his partner.

"We've already fixed that," he said. "We're going to raise the *Lusitania.*"

THE END

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